

ROBERTS'  
SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

For Town and Country.

NO. XIII.

JULY 15.

1841.

THE POACHER.—A NOVEL.

BY CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

[Concluded.]

VOL. III.—PART 20.

'Nothing, except that I am not guilty,' replied Joey.

'I have had the warrant out against him these seven years, or thereabouts, but he escaped me,' observed the peace-officer; 'he was but a lad then.'

'He must have been a child, to judge by his present appearance,' observed the magistrate, who was making out the committal. 'I now perfectly recollect the whole affair.'

The officer received the committal, and in half an hour our hero was locked up with felons of every description. His blood ran cold when he found himself enclosed within the massive walls; and, as soon as the jailor had left him alone, he shuddered and covered his face with his hands. Our hero had, however, the greatest of all consolations to support him—the consciousness of his innocence; but when he called to mind how happy and prosperous he had lately been—when he thought of Emma, and that now all his fair prospects and fondest anticipations were thrown to the ground, it is not surprising that, for a short time, he wept in his solitude and silence. To whom should he make known his situation? Alas! it would too soon be known, and would not every one, even Emma, shrink from a supposed murderer? No! there was one who would not—one on whose truth he could depend; Mary would not desert him even now; he would write to her and acquaint her with his situation. Our hero having made up his mind so to do, obtained paper and ink from the jailor when he came into his cell, which he did in about two hours after he had been locked up.—Joey wrote to Mary, stating his position in a few

words, and that the next morning he was to be taken down to Exeter to await his trial, and expressed a wish, if possible, that she would come there to see him; and, giving a guinea to the turnkey, requested him to forward the letter.

'It shall go safe enough, young master,' replied the man. 'Now do you know that yours is one of the strangest cases that ever came to my knowledge?' continued the man; 'we've been talking about it among ourselves; why, the first warrant for your apprehension was out more than eight years ago; and to look at you now, you cannot be more than seventeen or eighteen.'

'Yes, I am,' replied Joey; 'I am twenty-two.'

'Then don't you tell any body else that, and I will forget it. You see youth goes a great way in court; and they will see that you must have been quite a child when the deed was done—for I suppose by the evidence there is no doubt of that—and it won't be a hanging matter, that you may be certain of; you'll cross the water, that's all; so keep up your spirits, and look as young as you can.'

Mary received the letter on the following day, and was in the deepest distress at its contents. She was still weeping over it, and her work had been thrown down at her feet, when Mrs. Austin came into the dressing-room where she was sitting.

'What is the matter, Mary?' said Mrs. Austin.

'I have received a letter from my brother, Madam,' replied Mary; 'he is in the greatest distress; and I beg you to let me go to him immediately.'

'Your brother, Mary! what difficulty is he in?' asked Mrs. Austin.

Mary did not reply, but wept more.

'Mary, if your brother is in distress, I certainly will not refuse your going to him; but you should tell me what his distress is, or how shall I be able to advise or help you? Is it very serious?'

'He is in prison, Madam.'

'In prison for debt, I suppose?'

'No, madam; on a charge of murder, which he is not guilty of?'

'Murder!' exclaimed Mrs. Austin, 'and not guilty! Why—when—and where did this murder take place?'

'Many years ago, Madam, when he was quite a child.'

'How very strange!' thought Mrs. Austin, panting for breath, and sinking into a chair.—'But where, Mary?'

'Down in Devonshire, Madam, at Grassford.'

Mrs. Austin fell senseless from her chair.—Mary, very much surprised, hastened to her assistance, and, after a time, succeeded in restoring her, and leading her to a sofa. For some time, Mrs. Austin remained with her face buried in the cushions, while Mary stood over her. At last Mrs. Austin looked up, and, laying her hand upon Mary's arm, said, in a solemn tone—

'Mary, do not deceive me; you say that that boy is *your* brother—tell me, is not that false? I am sure that it is. Answer me, Mary.'

'He is not my born brother, Madam, but I love him as one,' replied Mary.

'Again answer me truly, Mary, if you have any regard for me. You know his real name; what is it?'

'Joseph Rushbrook, Madam, replied Mary, weeping.

'I was certain of it!' replied Mrs. Austin, bursting into tears; 'I knew it! the blow has come at last! God have mercy on me! What can be done?' And again Mrs. Austin abandoned herself to bitter grief.

Mary was in amazement; how Mrs. Austin should know anything of Joey's history, and why she should be in such distress was to her a complete mystery; she remained for some time at the side of her mistress, who became gradually more composed, Mary at last said,—

'May I go to him, Madam?'

'Yes,' replied Mrs. Austin, 'most certainly. Mary, I must have no secrets now; you must tell me everything. You see that I am deeply interested about this young man as well as yourself; it is quite sufficient for you at present to know that; before I say any thing more, you must be candid with me, and tell me how you became acquainted with him, and all that you know relative to his life; that I will assist you and him in every way in my power, that neither money nor interest shall be spared, you may be assured; and I think, Mary, that after this promise, you will not conceal any thing from me.'

'Indeed I will not, Madam,' replied Mary, 'for I love him as much as I can love.' Mary then commenced by stating that she was living at Gravesend when she first met with Joey.—

There was a little hesitation at the commencement of her narrative, which Mrs. Austin pretended not to observe; she then continued, winding up with the information which she had received from Furness the marine, their escape, and her admission into Mrs. Austin's family.

'And it was Joseph Rushbrook that came with you to this house?'

'Yes, Madam,' replied Mary; 'but one of the men was quite rude to me, and Joey took it up. Mr. Austin, hearing a noise, sent down to inquire the cause; the servants threw all the blame upon Joey, and he was ordered out of the house immediately. He refused even to come back to the hall, after the treatment he had received, for a long while; but it was he who was in the parlor when you opened the door, if you recollect, a few weeks ago.'

Mrs. Austin clasped her hands and then pressed them to her forehead; after a while she said,

'And what has he been doing since you came here?'

Mary then informed her mistress of all she knew of Joey's subsequent career.

'Well, Mary,' said Mrs. Austin, 'you must go to him directly. You will want money; but Mary, promise me that you will not say a word to him about what has passed between us—that is, for the present; by and by I may trust you more.'

'You may trust me, Madam,' replied Mary, looking her mistress in the face; 'but it is too late for me to go this afternoon; I will, if you please, now wait till to-morrow morning.'

'Do so, Mary; I am glad that you do not go to-night, for I wish you to stay with me; I have many questions to ask you. At present I wish to be alone, my good girl. Tell Mr. Austin that I am very unwell and do not dine below.'

'Shall I bring your dinner up here, madam?' asked Mary.

'Yes, you may bring it, Mary,' replied Mrs. Austin, with a faint smile.

Never did two people leave one another both so much wishing to be alone as Mary and Mrs. Austin. The former quitted the room, and, having first executed her commission, returned to her own apartment that she might reflect without being disturbed. What could be the reason of Mrs. Austin's behavior? What could she know of Joseph Rushbrook? and why so interested and moved? She had heard among the servants that Mr. and Mrs. Austin were formerly in a humbler sphere of life; that he was a half-pay officer; but there was still no clue to such interest about Joey Rushbrook. Mary thought and thought over and over again, revolved all that had passed in her mind, but could make nothing of it; and she was still trying to solve the mystery, when the house-maid came into the room and informed her that Mrs. Austin's bell had rung twice. Mrs. Austin, on her part, was still more bewildered; she could not regain sufficient calmness to enable her to decide how to act. Her son in prison, to be tried for his life for a crime he had not committed! Would he divulge the truth and sacrifice his father? She thought not. If he did not, would he not be condemned? and if

he were, could she remain away from him? or ought she not to divulge what the boy would conceal? And if he did confess the truth, would they find out that Mr. Austin and Joseph Rushbrook were one and the same person?—Would there be any chance of his escape?—Would he not sooner or later be recognized?—How dreadful was her situation! Then, again, should she acquaint her husband with the position of his son? If so, would he come forward? Yes, most certainly, he would never let Joey suffer for his crime. Ought she to tell her husband? And then Mary, who knew so much already, who had witnessed her distress and anguish, who was so fond of her son, could she trust her? Could she do without trusting her? Such were the various and conflicting ideas which passed in the mind of Mrs. Austin. At last she resolved that she would say nothing to her husband; that she would send Mary to her son; and that she would that evening have more conversation with the girl, and decide, after she she had talked with her, whether she would make her a confidante or not. Having made up her mind so far, she rang the bell for Mary.

'Are you better, madam?' asked Mary, who had entered the room very quietly.

'Yes, thank you, Mary; take your work and sit down; I wish to have some more conversation with you about this young person, Joseph Rushbrook; you must have seen that I am much interested about him.'

'Yes, Madam.'

'There was some portion of your story, Mary, which I did not quite understand. You have now lived with me five years, and I have every reason to be satisfied with your behavior. You have conducted yourself as a well-behaved, modest, and attentive young woman.'

'I am much obliged to you Madam for your good opinion,' replied Mary.

'And I hope you will admit that I have not been a hard mistress to you, Mary; but on the contrary, have shown you that I have been pleased with your conduct.'

'Certainly, Madam, you have; and I trust I am grateful.'

'I believe so,' replied Mrs. Austin. 'Now Mary I wish you to confide in me altogether.—What I wish to know is—how did you in so short a time become acquainted with this Furness, so as to obtain this secret from him? I may say, whom did you live with, and how did you live, when at Gravesend? for you have not mentioned that to me. It seems so odd to me that this man should have told a person to whom he had seen but for a few hours a secret of such moment.'

Mary's tears fell fast, but she made no reply.

'Cannot you answer me, Mary?'

'I can, Madam,' said she, at last; 'but if I tell the truth—and I cannot tell a lie now—you will despise me, and perhaps order me to leave your house immediately; and if you do, what will become of me?'

'Mary, if you think I intend to take advantage of a confession extorted from you, you do me wrong; I ask the question because it is

necessary that I should know the truth—because I cannot confide in you without you first confide in me; tell me, Mary, and do not be afraid.'

'Madam, I will; but pray do not forget that I have been under your roof for five years, and that I have been during that time an honest and modest girl. I was not so once, I confess it; and Mary's cheeks were red with shame, and she hung down her head.

'We all are sinful creatures, Mary,' replied Mrs. Austin; 'and who is there that has not fallen into error? The Scriptures say, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone;' nay, more, Mary, there is more joy over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine who need no repentance; shall I then be harsh to you my poor girl? No, no. By trusting me you have made me your friend; you must be mine, Mary for I want a friend now.'

Poor Mary fell on her knees before Mrs. Austin, and wept over her hand as she kissed it repeatedly.

Mrs. Austin was much affected, and, as the contrite girl recovered herself, Mrs. Austin leaned on her elbow, and putting her arm round Mary's neck, drew her head towards her, and gently kissed her on the brow.

'You are, indeed, a kind friend, Madam,' said Mary, after a pause, 'and may the Almighty reward you! You are unhappy; I know not why; but I would die to serve you. I only wish that you would let me prove it.'

'First, Mary, tell me as much of your own history as you choose to tell; I wish to know it.'

Mary then entered into the details of her marriage, her husband's conduct, her subsequent career, and her determination to lead a new life, which she had so sincerely proved by her late conduct.

Mary having concluded her narrative, Mrs. Austin addressed her thus:—

'Mary, if you imagine that you have fallen in my good opinion, after what you have confessed to me, you are much mistaken; you have, on the contrary, been raised. There have been few, very few, that have had the courage and fortitude that you have shown, or who could have succeeded as you have done. I was afraid to trust you before, but now I am not. I will not ask you not to betray me, for I am sure you will not. On two points only my lips are sealed; and the reason why they are sealed is, that the secret is not mine alone, and I have not permission to divulge it. That I am deeply interested in that boy is certain; nay, that he is near and very dear connexion is also the case; but what his exact relationship is towards me I must not at present say. You have asserted your belief of his innocence, and I tell you that you are right; he did not do the deed; I know who did, but I dare not reveal the name.'

'That is exactly what Joey said to me, Madam,' observed Mary; 'and, moreover, that he never would reveal it, even if he were on his trial.'

'I do not think that he ever will, Mary,' rejoined Mrs. Austin, bursting into tears: 'poor boy! it is horrible that he should suffer for an offence that he has not committed.'

'Surely, Madam, if he is found guilty, they will not hang him, he was such a child.'

'I scarcely know.'

'It's very odd that his father and mother have disappeared in the manner they did; I think it is very suspicious,' observed Mary.

'You must, of course, have your own ideas from what you have already heard,' replied Mrs. Austin, in a calm tone; 'but as I have already said, my lips on that subject are sealed. What I wish you to do Mary, is, not at first to let him know that I am interested about him, or even that I know any thing about him. Make all the inquiry you can as to what is likely to be the issue of the affair; and, when you have seen him, you must then come back and tell me all that he says, and all that has taken place.'

'I will, Madam.'

'You had better go away early to-morrow; one of the grooms shall drive you over to meet the coach that runs to Exeter. While I think of it, take my purse, and do not spare it, Mary, for money must not be thought of now; I am very unwell and must go to bed.'

'I had better bring up the tray, Madam; a mouthful and a glass of wine will be of service to you.'

'Do so, dear Mary, I feel very faint.'

As soon as Mrs. Austin had taken some refreshment, she entered again into conversation with Mary, asking her a hundred questions about her son. Mary, who had now nothing to conceal, answered freely; and when Mary wished her good night, Mrs. Austin was more than ever convinced that the boy's rectitude of principle would have made him an ornament to Society. Then came the bitter feeling that he was about to sacrifice himself; and that he would be condemned as a felon, disgraced, and perhaps executed; and as she turned on her restless pillow, she exclaimed, 'Thank God that he is innocent!—his poor father suffers more.'

## CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH MARY MAKES A DISCOVERY OF WHAT HAS BEEN LONG KNOWN TO THE READER.

It was hardly ten o'clock on the ensuing morning when Mary arrived at Exeter, and proceeded to the goal. Her eyes were directed to the outside of the massive building, and her cheeks blanched when she viewed the chains and fetters over the entrance, so truly designating the purport of the structure. There were several people at the steps and in the passage, making inquiries, and demanding permission of the turnkey to visit the prisoners; and Mary had to wait some minutes before she could make her request. Her appearance was so different to the usual class of applicants, that the turnkey looked at her with some surprise.

'Whom do you wish to see?' inquired the man, for Mary's voice had faltered.

'Joseph Rushbrook, my brother,' repeated Mary.

At this moment the head gaoler came to the wicket.

'She wishes to see her brother, young Rushbrook,' said the turnkey.

'Yes, certainly,' replied the gaoler, 'walk in, and sit down in the parlor for a little while till I can send a man with you.'

There was gentleness and kindness of manner shown by both the gentlemen towards Mary, for they were moved with her beauty and evident distress. Mary took a seat in the gaoler's room; the gaoler's wife was there, and she was more than kind. The turnkey came to show her to the cell; and when Mary rose, the gaoler's wife said to her: 'After you have seen your brother, my child, you had better come back again, and sit down here a little while, and then, perhaps, I can be of some use to you, in letting you know what can be done, and what is not allowed.'

Mary could not speak, but she looked at the gaoler's wife, her eyes brimming over with tears; the kind woman understood her. 'Go now,' said she, and mind you come back to me.'

The turnkey, without speaking, led her to the cell, fitted the key to the ponderous lock, pushed back the door, and remained outside. Mary entered, and in a second was in the arms of our hero, kissing him, and bedewing his cheeks with her tears.

'I was sure that you would come, Mary,' said Joey, 'now, sit down, and I will tell you how this happened, while you compose yourself; you will be better able to talk to me after a while.'

They sat down on the stretchers upon which the bed had been laid during the night, their hands still clasped, and as Joey entered into a narrative of all that had passed, Mary's sobs gradually diminished, and she was restored to something like composure.

'And what do you intend to do when you are brought to trial, my dear boy?' said Mary at last.

'I shall say nothing, except 'Not Guilty,' which is the truth Mary; I shall make no defence whatever.'

'But why will you not confess the truth?' replied Mary. 'I have often thought of this, and I have long made up my mind, that no one could act as you do, if a parent's life were not concerned; you or any body else would be mad to sacrifice himself in this way, unless it were to save a father.'

Joey's eyes were cast down on the stone pavement; he made no reply.

'Why, then, if I am right in my supposition,' continued Mary—'I do not ask you to say yes or no on that point—why should you not tell the truth? Furness told me that your father and mother had left the village and that he had attempted to trace them, but could not and he expressed himself sure that they had gone to America. Why, then, supposing I am right, should you sacrifice yourself for nothing?'

'Supposing you are right, Mary,' replied Joey, with his eyes still cast down, 'what proof is there that my parents have left the country? It was only the supposition of Furness, and it is my conviction they have not. Where they may be, I know not; but I feel positive that my mother would not leave the country without having first found out where I was, and have



taken me with her. No, Mary, my father and mother, if alive, are still in this country.'

'Recollect again my dear boy, that your father may be dead.'

'And if so, my mother would have by this time found me out; she would have advertised for me—done everything—I feel that she would have—she would have returned to Grassford, and—'

'And what, Joey?'

'I must not say what, Mary,' replied our hero; 'I have thought a great deal since I have been shut up here, and I have taken my resolution, which is not to be changed; so let us now say no more upon the subject, dear Mary. Tell me all about yourself.'

Mary remained another hour with Joey, and then bade him farewell; she was anxious to return to Mrs. Austin, and acquaint her with the result of her interview; with a heavy heart she walked away from the cell and went down into the parlor of the gaoler.

'Would you like to take anything?' said the gaoler's wife, after Mary had sat down.

'A little water,' replied Mary.

'And how is your brother?'

'He is innocent, repld Mary: 'he is indeed; but he won't tell anything, and they will condemn him.'

'Well, well; but do not be afraid; he must have been very young at the time, innocent or guilty, and he won't suffer, that I know; but he will be sent out of the country.'

'Then I will go with him,' replied Mary.

'Perhaps he will be pardoned, dear; keep your spirits up, and, if you have money, get a good lawyer.'

'Can you tell me who would be a good lawyer to apply to?'

'Yes, Mr. Trevor; he is a very clever man, and comes the Western Circuit; if any one can save him, he can.'

'I will take his name down, if you please,' said Mary.

The gaoler's wife gave Mary a piece of paper and pen and ink; Mary wrote down the name and address of Mr. Trevor, and then, with many thanks, took her leave.

On her return to the hall, Mary communicated to Mrs. Austin what had passed. Mrs. Austin perceived that Joey would not swerve from his resolution, and all that could be done was to procure the best legal assistance.

'Mary, my good girl,' said Mrs. Austin, 'here is money which you will find necessary for your adopted brother's assistance. You say that you have obtained the name of the best legal person to be employed in his behalf. To-morrow you must go to London, and call upon that gentleman. It may be as well not to mention my name. As his sister, you of course seek the best legal advice. You must manage all this as if from yourself.'

'I will, Madam.'

'And, Mary, if you think it advisable, you can remain in town two or three days; but pray write to me every day.'

'I will, Madam.'

'Let me know your address, as I may wish to say something to you when I know what has been done.'

'I will, Madam.'

'And now you had better go to bed, Mary, for you must be tired; indeed, you look very fatigued, my poor girl; I need not caution you not to say anything to any of the servants; good night.'

Mary threw herself on her bed, she was indeed worn out with anxiety and grief; at last she slept. The next morning she was on her way to town, having, in reply to the curiosity of the servants, stated that the cause of her journey was the dangerous illness of her brother.

As soon as she arrived in London, Mary drove to the chambers of the lawyer, whose direction she had obtained from the Exeter gaoler; he was at home, and after waiting a short time, she was ushered by the clerk into his presence.

'What can I do for you, young lady?' inquired Mr. Trevor, with some surprise; 'it is not often that the den of a lawyer has such a bright vision to cheer it. Do me the favor to take a chair.'

'I am not a young lady, Sir,' replied Mary; 'I have come to you to request that you will be so kind as to defend my brother, who is about to be tried.'

'Your brother! what is he charged with?'

'Murder,' replied Mary; 'but indeed, Sir, he is not guilty,' she continued, as she burst into tears.

Mr. Trevor was not only a clever but also a kind and considerate man. He remained silent for some minutes to allow Mary time to recover herself. When she was more composed, he said:

'What is your brother's name?'

'Joseph Rushbrook.'

'Rushbrook! Rushbrook; I well remember that name,' remarked Mr. Trevor; 'strange, the Christian name also the same! it is singular, certainly. The last time I was concerned for a person of that name, I was the means of his coming into a large landed property; now I am requested to defend one of the same name, accused of murder.'

Mary was astonished at this observation of Mr. Trevor's, but made no reply.

'Have you the indictment? Where did the murder take place?'

'In Devonshire, Sir, many years ago.'

'And he is now in Exeter gaol? Come, tell me all the particulars.'

Mary told all that she knew, in a very clear and concise manner.

'Now, my good girl,' said Mr. Trevor, 'I must see your brother. In two days I shall be down at Exeter. If you write to him, or see him, before I do, you must tell him he must tell him he must trust in his lawyer, and have no reservation, or I shall not be able to do him so much service; Allow me to ask you, have you any relations in Yorkshire?'

'No, Sir, none.'

'And yet the name and Christian name are exactly the same. It's an odd coincidence!—They, however, changed their name, when they came into the property.'

'Changed the name of Rushbrook, Sir!' said Mary, who now thought that she had a clue to Joey's parents.

'Yes, changed it to Austin; they live now in Dorsetshire. I mention it because, if interest is required for your brother, and he could prove any relationship, it might be valuable. But, bless me! what is the matter? Smithers,' cried Mr. Trevor, as he ran and supported Mary, 'some water! quick! the girl has fainted!'

It was surprise at this astounding intelligence, her regard for Mrs. Austin, and the light now thrown upon the interest she had shown for our hero, and the conviction of what must be her suffering, which had overcome the poor girl.—In a short time she recovered.

'I thank you, Sir, but I have suffered so much anxiety about my poor brother,' said Mary, faltering, and almost gasping for breath.

'He cannot be a very bad boy, since you are so fond of him,' said Mr. Trevor.

'No, indeed; I wish I was half as good,' murmured Mary.

'I will do all I possibly can, and that immediately; indeed, as soon as I have the documents, and have perused them, I will go to your brother a day sooner than I intended. Do you feel yourself well enough to go now? If you do, my clerk shall procure you a coach. Do you stay in London? If so, you must leave you address.'

Mary replied that she intended to set off to Exeter that evening by the mail, and would meet him there.

Mr. Trevor handed her out, put her into the coach, and she ordered the man to drive to the inn where she was stopping. Mary's senses were quite bewildered. It was late, and the mail was to start in an hour or two. She secured her place, and during her long journey she hardly knew how time passed away. On her arrival, in the morning, she hastened to the prison. She was received kindly as before by the gaoler and his wife, and then attended the turnkey into Joey's cell. As soon as the door was closed she threw herself down on the bedstead, and wept bitterly, quite heedless of our hero's remonstrance or attempts to soothe her.

'Oh! it is horrible—too horrible!' cried the almost fainting girl. 'What can—what must be done! Either way misery—disgrace! Lord, forgive me! But my head is turned. That you should be here! that you should be in this strait! Why was it not me! I—I have deserved all and more; prison, death, everything is not too bad for me; but you, my dear, dear boy!'

'Mary, what is the reason of this? I cannot understand. Are matters worse than they were before?' said Joey. 'And why should you talk in such a way about yourself? If you ever did wrong, you were driven to it by the conduct of others; but your reformation is all your own.'

'Ah, Joey!' replied Mary; 'I should think little of my repentance if I held myself absolved by a few years' good conduct. No, no; a whole life of repentance is not sufficient for me; I must live on, ever repenting, and must die full of penitence, and imploring for pardon. But why do I talk of myself!'

'What has made you thus, Mary?'

'Joey, I cannot keep it a secret from you; it is useless to attempt it. I have discovered your father and mother!'

'Where are they? and do they know anything of my position?'

'Yes, your mother does, but not your father.'

'Tell me all, Mary, and tell me quickly.'

'Your father and mother are Mr. and Mrs. Austin.'

Joey's utterance failed him from astonishment; he stared at Mary, but he could not utter a word. Mary again wept; and Joey for some minutes remained by her side in silence.

'Come, Mary,' said Joey at last, 'you can now tell me everything.'

Joey sat down by her side, and Mary then communicated what had passed between herself and Mrs. Austin; her acknowledgment that he was her relation; the interest she took in him; the money she had lavished; her sufferings, which she had witnessed; and then she wound up with the conversation between her and Mr. Trevor.

'You see, my dear boy, there is no doubt of the fact. I believe I did promise Mrs. Austin to say nothing to you about it; but I forgot my promise till just this minute. Now, Joey, what is to be done?'

'Tell me something about my father, Mary,' said Joey; 'I wish to know how he is estimated, and how he behaves in his new position.'

Mary told him all she knew, which was not a great deal; he was respected; but he was a strange man, kept himself very much aloof from others, and preferred seclusion.

'Mary,' said Joey, 'you know what were my intentions before; they are now still more fixed. I will take my chance; but I never will say one word. You already know and have guessed more than I could wish; I will not say that you are right, for it is not my secret.'

'I thought as much,' replied Mary, 'and I feel how much my arguments must be weakened by the disclosures I have made. Before, I only felt for you; now I feel for all. Oh, Joey! why are you so innocent, to be punished this way, and I, so guilty, to be spared?'

'It is the will of God I that I should be in this strait, Mary; and now let us not renew the subject.'

But, Joey, Mr. Trevor is coming here tomorrow; and he told me to tell you that you must have no reservation with your lawyer, if you wish him to be of service to you.'

'You have given your message, Mary, and now you must leave me to deal with him.'

'My heart is breaking,' said Mary, solemnly. 'I wish I were in my grave, if that wish is not wicked.'

'Mary, recollect one thing;—recollect it supports me, and let it support you;—I am innocent.'

'You are, I'm sure; would to Heaven that I could say the same for another! But tell me, Joey, what shall I do when I meet your mother? I loved her before; but oh! how much I love her now! What shall I do? Shall I tell her

that I have discovered all? I do not know how I can keep it from her.'

'Mary, I see no objection to your telling her, but tell her also that I will not see her till after my trial; whatever my fate may be, I should like to see her after it is decided.'

'I will take your message the day after tomorrow,' replied Mary; 'now I must go and look out for lodgings, and then write to your mother. Bless you!'

Mary quitted the cell; she had suffered so much that she could hardly gain the gaoler's parlor, where she sat down to recover herself.—She inquired of the gaoler's wife if she could procure apartments near to the prison, and the woman requested one of the turnkeys to take her to a lodging which would be suitable. As soon as Mary was located, she wrote a letter to Mrs. Austin, informing her of her having seen the lawyer, and that his services were secured; and then, worn out with the anxiety and excitement of the three last days, she retired to bed, and in her sleep forgot her sufferings.

## CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH OUR HERO MAKES UP HIS MIND TO BE HANGED.

Our hero was not sorry to be left alone; for the first time, he felt the absence of Mary a relief. He was almost as much bewildered as poor Mary, with the strange discovery; his father a great landed proprietor, one of the first men in the county, universally respected—in the first society! his mother, as he knew by Mary's letters written long ago, courted and sought after, loved and admired! If he had made a resolution—a promise, he might say—when a mere child, that he would take the onus of the deed upon his own shoulders, to protect his father, then a poacher and in humble life, how much more was it his duty, now that his father would so feel any degradation—now that being raised so high, his fall would be so bitter, his disgrace so deeply felt, and the stigma so doubly severe! 'No, no,' thought Joey, 'were I to impeach my father now—to accuse him of a deed which would bring him to the scaffold—I should not only be considered his murderer, but it would be said I had done it to inherit his possessions; I should be considered one who had sacrificed his father to obtain his property. I should be scouted, shunned, and deservedly despised; the disgrace of my father having been hanged would be a trifle compared with the reproach of a son having condemned a parent to the gallows. Now I am doubly bound to keep to my resolution, and, come what may, the secret shall die with me; and Joey slept soundly that night.'

The next morning Mr. Trevor came into his cell.

'I have seen your sister, Rushbrook,' said he, 'and, at her request, have come to assist you, if it is in my power. She has been here since, I have been informed, and, if so, I have no doubt that she has told you that you must have no secrets with your lawyer; your legal friend and adviser in this case is your true friend; he is

bound in honor to secrecy, and were you to declare now that you were guilty of this murder, the very confidence would only make me more earnest in your defence. I have here all the evidence at the coroner's inquest, and the verdict against you; tell me honestly what did take place, and then I shall know better how to convince the jury that it did not.'

'You are very kind, Sir, but I can say nothing even to you, except that, on my honor, I am not guilty.'

'But, tell me then, how did it happen?'

'I have nothing more to say, and, with my thanks to you, Sir, I will say nothing more.'

'This is very strange: the evidence is strong against you; was the evidence correct?'

'The parties were correct in their evidence, as it appeared to them.'

'And yet you are not guilty!'

'I am not, I shall plead not guilty, and leave my fate to the jury.'

'Are you mad? Your sister is a sweet young woman, and has interested me greatly, but, if innocent, you are throwing away your life.'

'I am doing my duty, Sir; whatever you may think of my conduct, the secret dies with me.'

'And for whom do you sacrifice yourself in this way, if as you say, and as your sister declares, you are not guilty?'

Joey made no reply, but sat down on the bedstead.

'If the deed was not done by you, by whom was it done?' urged Mr. Trevor. 'If you make no reply to that, I must throw up my brief.'

'You said just now,' returned Joey, 'that if I declared myself guilty of the murder, you would still defend me; now, because I say I am not, and will not say who is, you must throw up your brief. Surely you are inconsistent.'

'I must have your confidence, my good lad.'

'You never will have more than you have now. I have not requested you to defend me. I care nothing about defence.'

'Then you wish to be hanged?'

'No, I do not; but, rather than say anything, I will take my chance of it.'

'This is very strange,' said Mr. Trevor; after a pause he continued, 'I observe that you are supposed to have killed this man, Byres, when nobody else was present; you were known to go out with your father's gun, and the keeper's evidence proved that you poached. Now, as there is no evidence of intentional murder on your part, it is not impossible that the gun went off by accident, and that, mere boy as you must have been at that age, you were so frightened at what had taken place, that you absconded from fear. It appears to me that that should be our line of defence.'

'I never fired at the man at all,' said Joey.

'Who fired the gun, then?' asked Mr. Trevor.

Joey made no reply.

'Rushbrook,' said Mr. Trevor, 'I am afraid I can be of little use to you; indeed, were it not that your sister's tears have interested me, I would not take up your cause. I cannot understand your conduct, which appears to me to be absurd; your motives are inexplicable, and

all I can believe is, that you have committed the crime, and will not divulge the secret to any one, not even to those who would befriend you.'

'Think of me what you please, Sir,' rejoined our hero; 'see me condemned, and, if it should be so, executed; and after all that has taken place, believe me, when I assert to you—as I hope for salvation—I am not guilty. I thank you, Sir, thank you sincerely, for the interest you have shown for me; I feel grateful, and the more so for what you have said of Mary; but if you were to remain here for a month, you could gain no more from me than you have already.'

'After such an avowal, it is useless my stopping here,' said Mr Trevor; 'I must make what defence I can, for your sister's sake.'

'Many, many thanks, Sir, for your kindness; I am really grateful to you,' replied Joey.

Mr. Trevor remained for a minute scanning the countenance of our hero. There was something in it so clear and bright, so unflinching, so proclaiming innocence and high feeling, that he sighed deeply as he left the cell.

His subsequent interview with Mary was short; he explained to her the difficulties arising from the obstinacy of her brother; but at the same time expressed his determination to do his best to save him.

Mary, as soon as she had seen Mr. Trevor, set off on her return to the Hall. As soon as she went to Mrs Austin, Mary apprised her of Mr. Trevor's having consented to act as counsel for our hero, and also of Joey's resolute determination not to divulge the secret.

'Madam,' said Mary, after some hesitation, 'it is my duty to have no secret from you; and I hope you will not be angry when I tell you that I have discovered that which you would have concealed.'

'What have you discovered, Mary?' asked Mrs Austin, looking at her with alarm.

'That Joseph Rushbrook is your own son,' said Mary, kneeling down, and kissing the hand of her mistress. 'The secret is safe with me, depend upon it,' she continued.

'And how have you made the discovery, Mary; for I will not attempt to deny it?'

Mary then entered into a detail of her conversation with Mr Trevor. 'He asked me,' said she, 'as the sister of Joey, if we had any relatives, and I replied 'No;' so that he has no suspicion of the fact. I beg your pardon, Madam, but I could not keep it from Joey; I quite forgot my promise to you at the time.'

'And what did my poor child say?'

'That he would not see you until after his trial; but, when his fate was decided, he should like to see you once more. Oh, Madam! what a painful sacrifice! and yet, now, I do not blame him; for it is his duty.'

'My dread is not for my son, Mary; he is innocent; and that to me is everything; but if my husband was to hear of his being about to be tried, I know not what would be the consequence. If it can only be kept from his knowledge—God knows that he has suffered enough! But what am I saying? I was talking nonsense.'

'Oh, Madam! I know the whole; I cannot be blinded either by Joey or you. I beg your pardon, Madam, but, although Joey would not reply, I told him that his father did the deed.—But do not answer me, Madam; be silent, as your son has been; and believe me when I say that my suspicion could not be wrenched from me even by torture.'

'I do trust you, Mary; and perhaps the knowledge that you have obtained is advantageous. When does the trial come on?'

'The assizes commence to-morrow forenoon, Madam, they say.'

Oh! how I long to have him in these arms!' exclaimed Mrs. Austin.

'It is, indeed, a sad trial to a mother, Madam,' replied Mary; 'but still it must not be until after he is—'

'—Yes; until he is condemned! God have mercy on me; Mary, you had better return to Exeter; but write to me every day. Stay by him and comfort him; and may the God of comfort listen to the prayers of an unhappy and distracted mother! Leave me now. God bless you, my dear girl! you have indeed proved a comfort. Leave me now.'

## PART XXI.—VOL. III.—CHAPTER XIII.

IN WHICH OUR HERO PROVES GAME TO THE VERY LAST.

Mary returned to Exeter. The trial of our hero was expected to come on the following day. She preferred being with Joey to witnessing the agony and distress of Mrs. Austin, to whom she could offer no comfort; indeed, her own state of suspense was so wearing, that she almost felt relief when the day of trial came on. Mr. Trevor had once more attempted to reason with Joey, but our hero continued firm in his resolution, and Mr. Trevor, when he made his appearance in the court wore upon his countenance the marks of sorrow and discontent; he did not, nevertheless, fail in his duty. Joey was brought to the bar, and his appearance was so different from that which was to be expected in one charged with the crime of murder, that strong interest was immediately excited; the spectators anticipated a low-bred ruffian, and they beheld a fair, handsome young man, with an open brow and intelligent countenance, whose eye quailed not when it met their own, and whose demeanor was bold without being offensive. True that there were traces of sorrow in his countenance, and that his cheeks were pale; but no one who had any knowledge of human nature, or any feeling of charity in his disposition, could say that there was the least appearance of guilt. The jury were empannelled, the counts of the indictment read over, and the trial commenced, and, as the indictment was preferred, the judge caught the date of the supposed offence.

'What is the date?' said the judge, 'the year I mean?'

Upon the reply of the clerk, his lordship observed, 'Eight years ago!' and then looking at



the prisoner, added, 'Why, he must have been a child!'

'As is too often the case,' replied the prosecuting counsel; 'a child in years, but not in guilt, as we shall soon bring evidence to substantiate.'

As the evidence brought forward was the same, as we have already mentioned, as given on the inquest over the body, we shall pass it over; that of Furness, as he was not to be found, was read to the court. As the trial proceeded, and as each fact came forth, more condemning, people began to look with less compassion on the prisoner: they shook their heads and compressed their lips.

As soon as the evidence for the Crown was closed, Mr. Trevor rose in our hero's defence. He commenced by ridiculing the idea of trying a child upon so grave a charge, for a child the prisoner must have been at the time the offence was committed. 'Look at him, now, gentlemen of the jury; eight years ago the murder of the pedlar, Byres, took place; why, you may judge for yourselves whether he is now more than seventeen years of age; he could scarcely have held a gun at the time referred to.'

'The prisoner's age does not appear in the indictment,' observed the judge.

'May we ask his age, my lord?' demanded one of the jury.

'The prisoner may answer the question if he pleases,' replied the judge, 'not otherwise; perhaps he may not yet be seventeen years of age. Do you wish to state your age to the jury, prisoner?'

'I have no objection, my lord,' replied Joey, not regarding the shakes of the head of his counsel; 'I was twenty two last month.'

Mr. Trevor bit his lips at this unfortunate regard for truth in our hero, and, after a time, proceeded, observing, that the very candor of the prisoner, in not taking advantage of his youthful appearance to deceive the jury, ought to be a strong argument in his favor. Mr. Trevor then continued to address the jury upon the vagueness of the evidence, and, as he proceeded, observed,—

'Now, gentlemen of the jury, if this case had been offered to me to give an opinion upon, I should, without any previous knowledge of the prisoner, have just come to the following conclusion:—I should have said (and your intelligence and good sense will, I have no doubt, bear me out in this supposition), that, allowing that the pedlar, Byres, did receive his death by the prisoner's hand,—I say, gentlemen, that *allowing* such to have been the case, for I deny that it is borne out by the evidence—that it must have been that, at the sudden meeting of the pedlar, when the lad's conscience told him that what he was doing was wrong, that the gun of the prisoner was discharged unintentionally, and the consequence was fatal: I should then surmise further, that the prisoner, frightened at the deed which he had unintentionally committed, had absconded upon the first impulse. That, gentlemen, I believe to be the real state of the case; and what was more natural than that a

child under such circumstances should have been frightened, and have attempted to evade the inquiry which must have eventually ensued?'

'You state such to be your opinion, Mr. Trevor; do you wish me to infer that the prisoner pleads such as his defence?' asked the judge.

'My Lord,' replied Mr. Trevor, in a hesitating way, 'the prisoner has pleaded not guilty to the crime imputed to him.'

'That I am aware of, but I wish to know whether you mean to say that the prisoner's defence is, not having anything to do with the death of the pedlar, or upon the plea of his gun going off by accident?'

'My lord, it is my duty to my client to make no admission whatever.'

'I should think that you would be safe enough, all circumstances considered, if you took the latter course,' observed the judge, humanely.

Mr. Trevor was now in a dilemma; he knew not how to move. He was fearful, if he stated positively that our hero's gun went off by accident, that Joey would deny it; and yet if he was permitted to assert this to be the case, he saw, from the bearing of the judge, that the result of the trial would be satisfactory. It hardly need be observed that both judge, prosecuting counsel, jury, and everybody in court, were much astonished at this hesitation, on the part of the prisoner's counsel.

'Do you mean to assert that the gun went off by accident, Mr. Trevor?' asked the judge.

'I never fired the gun, my lord,' replied Joey in a clear steady voice.

'The prisoner has answered for me,' replied Mr. Trevor, recovering himself; 'we are perfectly aware that by making a statement of accidental murder, we could safely have left the prisoner in the hands of an intelligent jury; but the fact is, my lord, that the prisoner never fired the gun, and therefore could not be guilty of the murder imputed to him.'

Mr Trevor had felt, upon our hero's assertion, that his case was hopeless; he roused up, however to make a strong appeal to the jury; unfortunately, it was declamation only, not disproof of the charges, and the reply of the prosecuting counsel completely established the guilt of our hero upon what is called collateral evidence. The jury retired for a few minutes after the summing-up of the judge, and then returned a verdict against our hero of Guilty, but recommended him to mercy. Although the time to which we refer was one in which leniency was seldom extended, still there was the youth of our hero, and so much mystery in the transaction, that when the judge passed the sentence, he distinctly stated that the royal mercy would be so far extended, that the sentence would be commuted to transportation. Our hero made no reply; he bowed, and was led back to his place of confinement, and in a few minutes afterwards the arms of the weeping Mary were encircled round his neck.

'You don't blame me, Mary?' said Joey.

'No, no,' sobbed Mary; 'all that the world can do, is nothing, when we are innocent.'

'I shall soon be far from here, Mary,' said Jo-



ey, sitting down on the bedstead; 'but, thank heaven! it is over!'

The form of Emma Phillips rose up in our hero's imagination, and he covered up his face with his hands.

'Had it not been for her!' thought he. 'What must she think of me! a convicted felon! this is the hardest of all to bear up against.'

'Joey,' said Mary, who had watched him in silence and tears, 'I must go now; you will see her now will you not?'

'She never will see me; she despises me already,' replied Joey.

'Your mother despise her noble boy? oh, never! How can you think so?'

'I was thinking of somebody else, Mary,' replied Joey. 'Yes, I wish to see my mother.'

'Then I will go now; recollect what her anxiety and impatience must be. I will travel post to-night, and be there by to-morrow morning.'

'Go, dear Mary, go, and God bless you; hasten to my poor mother, and tell her that I am quite—yes—quite happy and resigned. Go now, quickly.'

Mary left the cell, and Joey, whose heart was breaking at the moment that he said he was happy and resigned, for he was thinking of his eternal separation from Emma, as soon as he was alone, threw himself on his bed, and gave full vent to his feelings of bitter anguish which he could no longer repress.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH EVERYBODY APPEARS TO BE ON THE MOVE EXCEPT OUR HERO.

Mary set off with post-horses, and arrived at the Hall before day-light. She remained in her own room until the post came in, when her first object was to secure the newspapers before the butler had opened them, stating that her mistress was awake and requested to see them. She took the same precaution when the other papers came in late in the day, so that Mr. Austin should not read the account of the trial; this was the more easy to accomplish, as he seldom looked at a newspaper. As soon the usual hour had arrived, Mary presented herself to her mistress, and communicated the melancholy result of the trial. Mrs. Austin desired Mary to say to the servants that she was gone to remain with a lady, a friend of hers, some miles off, who was dangerously ill, and should, in all probability not return that night, or even the next, if her friend was not better; and, her preparations for the journey being completed, she set off with Mary a little before dark on her way to Exeter.

But, if Mr. Austin did not look at the newspapers, others did, and amongst the latter was Major M'Shane, who, having returned from his tour, was sitting with O'Donahue and the two ladies in the library of his own house when the post came in. The major had hardly looked at the newspaper, when the name of Rushbrook caught his eye; he turned to it, read a portion, and gave a loud whistle of surprise.

'What's the matter, my dear?' asked Mrs. M'Shane.

'Murder's the matter my jewel,' returned the major; 'but don't interrupt me just now, for I'm breathless with confusion.'

M'Shane read the whole account of the trial, and the verdict, and then without saying a word, put it into the hands of O'Donahue. As soon as O'Donahue had finished it, M'Shane beckoned him out of the room.

'I didn't like to let Mrs. M'Shane know it, as she would take it sorely to heart,' said M'Shane; 'but what's to be done now; O'Donahue? You see the boy has not peached upon his father, and is convicted himself. It would be poor comfort to Mrs. M'Shane, who loves the memory of that boy better than she would a dozen little M'Shanes, if it pleased heaven to grant them to her, to know that the boy is found, when he is only found to be sent away over the water; so it is better that nothing should be said about it just now; but what is to be done?'

'Well, it appears to me that we had better be off to Exeter directly,' replied O'Donahue.

'Yes, and see him,' rejoined the major.

'Before I saw him, M'Shane, I would calup-on the lawyer who defended him, and tell him what you know about the father, and what our suspicions, I may say convictions, are. He would then tell us how to proceed, so as to procure his pardon, perhaps.'

'That's good advice; and now what excuse are we to make for running away?'

'As for my wife,' replied O'Donahue, 'I may as well tell her the truth; she will keep it secret; and as for your's, she will believe anything you please to tell her.'

'And so she will, the good creature, and that's why I never can bear to deceive her about anything; but, in this instance, it is all for her own sake; and, therefore, suppose your wife says that you must go to town immediately, and that I had better accompany you, as it is upon a serious affair.'

'Be it so,' replied O'Donahue, 'do you order the horses to be put to while I settle the affair with the females.'

This was soon done, and in half an hour, the two gentlemen were on their way to Exeter; and as soon as they arrived, which was late in the evening, they established themselves at the principal hotel.

In the meantime Mrs. Austin and Mary had also arrived, and had taken up their quarters at another hotel, where Mrs. Austin would be less exposed. It was, however, too late to visit our hero when they arrived, and the next morning they proceeded to the gaol, much about the same hour that M'Shane and O'Donahue paid their visit to Mr. Trevor.

Perhaps it will be better to leave to the imagination of our readers the scene which occurred between our hero and his mother, as we have had too many painful ones already in this latter portion of our narrative. The joy and grief of both at meeting again, only to part forever—the strong conflict between duty and love—the lacerated feelings of the doting mother, the true and affectionate son, and the devoted servant and friend—may be better imagined than expressed.

but their grief was raised to its climax when our hero, pressed in his mother's arms as he narrated his adventures, confessed that another pang was added to his sufferings in parting with the object of his earliest affections.

'My poor, poor boy, this is indeed a bitter cup to drink!' exclaimed Mrs Austin; 'may God, in his mercy, look down upon you, and console you!'

'He will, mother; and when far away, not before—not until you can safely do so—promise me to go to Emma, and tell her that I was not guilty; I can bear anything but that she should despise me.'

'I will, my child, I will; and I will love her dearly for your sake. Now go on with your history, my dear boy.'

We must leave our hero and his mother in conversation, and to return to M'Shane and O'Donahue, who, as soon as they had breakfasted, repaired to the lodgings of Mr. Trevor.

M'Shane, who was spokesman, soon entered upon the business which brought them there.

Mr. Trevor stated to him the pertinacity of our hero, and the impossibility of saving him from condemnation, remarking at the same time, that there was a mystery which he could not fathom.

M'Shane took upon himself to explain that mystery, having as we have before observed, already been sufficiently clear sighted to fathom it; and referred to O'Donahue to corroborate his opinion of the elder Rushbrook's character.

'And this father of his is totally lost sight of, you say?' observed Mr. Trevor.

'Altogether; I have never been able to trace him,' replied M'Shane.

'I was observing to his sister——, said Mr. Trevor.

'He has no sister,' interrupted M'Shane.

'Still there is a young woman—and a very sweet young woman, too—who came to me in London, to engage me for his defence, who represented herself as his sister.'

'This is strange,' rejoined M'Shane, musing.

'But, however, continued Mr. Trevor, 'as I was about to say, I was observing to this young woman, how strange it was, that the first time I was legally employed for the name of Rushbrook, it should be a case which, in the opinion of the world, should produce the highest gratification and that in the second in one which has ended in misery.'

'How do you mean?' inquired M'Shane.

'I put a person of the name of Rushbrook in possession of a large fortune. I asked our young friend's sister whether he could be any relation, but she said no.'

'Young Rushbrook had no sister, I am sure,' interrupted M'Shane.

'I now recollect,' continued Mr. Trevor, 'that this person who came into the fortune stated that he had formerly held a commission in the army.'

'Then depend on it it's Rushbrook himself who has given himself brevet rank,' replied M'Shane. 'Where is he now?'

'Down in Dorsetshire,' said Mr. Trevor; 'he succeeded to the Austin estate, and has taken his name

'Tis he! 'tis he! I'll swear to it,' cried M'Shane; 'Phallaloo! Murder and Irish! the murderer's out now. No wonder this gentleman would not return my visit, and keeps himself entirely at home. I beg your pardon, Mr. Trevor, but what sort of a looking personage may he be, for, as I have said, I have never seen this Mr. Austin?'

'A fine tall, soldierly man; I should say rough, but still not vulgar, dark hair and eyes, aquiline nose; if I recollect right——'

'Tis the man!' exclaimed O'Donahue.

'And his wife—did you see her?' asked M'Shane.

'No, I did not,' replied Mr. Trevor.

'Well, I have seen her very often,' rejoined M'Shane; 'and a very nice creature she appears to be. I have never been in their house in my life, I called and left my card, that's all; but I have met her several times; however, as you have not seen her, that proves nothing; and now, Mr. Trevor, what do you think we should do?'

'I really am not prepared to advise; it is a case of great difficulty; I think, however, it would be advisable for you to call upon young Rushbrook, and see what you can obtain from him; after that, if you come here to-morrow morning, I will be better prepared to give you an answer.'

'I will do as you wish, Sir; I will call upon my friend first, and my name's not M'Shane, if I don't call upon his father afterwards.'

'Do nothing rashly, I beg,' replied Mr. Trevor; 'recollect you have come to me for advice, and I think you are bound at least to hear what I have to propose before you act.'

'That's the truth, Mr. Trevor, so now, with many thanks, we will take our leave, and call upon you to-morrow.'

M'Shane and O'Donahue then proceeded to the gaol and demanded permission to see our hero.

'There are two ladies with him, just now,' said the gaoler; 'they have been there these three hours, so I suppose they will not be much longer.'

'We will wait then,' replied O'Donahue.

In about a quarter of an hour Mrs Austin and Mary made their appearance; the former was closely veiled when she entered the gaoler's parlor in which O'Donahue and M'Shane were waiting. It had not been the intention of Mrs Austin to have gone into the parlor, but her agitation and distress had so overcome her that she could scarcely walk, and Mary had persuaded her as she came down to go in and take a glass of water. The gentlemen rose when she came in; she immediately recognised M'Shane, and the sudden rush into her memory of what might be the issue of the meeting, was so overwhelming, that she dropped into a chair and fainted.

Mary ran for some water, and while she did so, M'Shane and O'Donahue went to the assistance of Mrs Austin. The veil was removed, and, of course, she was immediately recognised by M'Shane, who was now fully con-

vinced that Austin and Rushbrook were one and the same person.

Upon the first signs of returning animation, M'Shane had the delicacy to withdraw; and, making a sign to the gaoler, he and O'Donahue repaired to the cell of our hero. The greeting was warm on both sides. M'Shane was eager to enter upon the subject; he pointed out to Joey that he knew who committed the murder; indeed, plainly told him that it was the deed of his father. But Joey, as before, would admit nothing; he was satisfied with their belief in his innocence, but, having made up his mind to suffer, could not be persuaded to reveal the truth, and M'Shane and O'Donahue quitted the cell, perceiving that unless most decided steps were taken, without the knowledge of our hero, there was no chance of his being extricated from his melancholy fate. Struck with admiration at his courage and self-devotion towards an unworthy parent, they bade him farewell, simply promising to use all their endeavors in his behalf.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE INTERVIEW.

According to their arrangement, on the following morning M'Shane and O'Donahue called upon Mr. Trevor, and after half an hour's consultation, it was at last decided that they should make an attempt to see Austin, and bide the issue of the interview, when they would again communicate with the lawyer, who was to return to town on the following day. They then set off as fast as four horses could convey them, and drove direct to the Hall, where they arrived about six o'clock in the evening.

It had so happened that Austin had the evening before inquired for his wife. The servants reported to him what Mary had told them, and Austin, who was in a fidgetty humor, had sent for the coachman who had driven the carriage, to inquire whether Mrs. Austin's friend was very ill. The coachman stated that he had not driven over to the place in question, but to the nearest post-town, where Mrs. Austin had taken a post chaise. This mystery and concealment on the part of his wife was not very agreeable to a man of Mr. Austin's temper; he was by turns indignant and alarmed; and after having passed a sleepless night, had been all day anxiously awaiting Mrs. Austin's return, when the sound of wheels was heard, and the carriage of M'Shane drove up to the door. On inquiry if Mr. Austin was at home, the servants replied that they would ascertain; and Austin, who imagined that this unusual visit might be connected with his wife's mysterious absence, desired the butler to show in the visitors. Austin started at the announcement of the names, but, recovering himself, he remained standing near the table, drawn up to his full height.

'Mr. Austin,' said O'Donahue, 'we have ventured to call upon you upon an affair of some importance: as Mr. Austin we have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, but we were formerly, if I mistake not, serving his Majesty in the same regiment?'

'I do not pretend to deny, gentlemen, that you once knew me under different circumstances,' replied Austin, haughtily; 'will you please to be seated, and then probably you will favor me with the cause of this visit.'

'May I inquire of you, Mr. Austin,' said M'Shane, 'if you may have happened to look over the newspapers within these few days?'

'No! and now I recollect—which is unusual—the papers have not been brought to me regularly.'

'They were probably withheld from you in consequence of the intelligence they would have conveyed to you,' returned M'Shane.

'May I ask what that intelligence may be?' inquired Austin, surprised.

'The trial, conviction, and sentence to transportation for life of one Joseph Rushbrook, for the murder of a man of the name of Byres,' replied M'Shane; 'Mr. Austin, you are of course aware that he is your son.'

'You have, of course, seen the party, and he has made that statement to you,' rejoined Mr. Austin.

'We have seen the party, but he has not made that statement,' replied O'Donahue; 'but do you pretend to deny it?'

'I am not aware upon what grounds you have thought proper to come here to interrogate me,' replied Austin. 'Supposing that I had a son, and that son has, as you say, been guilty of the deed, it certainly is no concern of yours.'

'First, with your leave,' resumed M'Shane, 'let me prove that he is your son. You were living at Grassford, where the murder was committed; your son ran away in consequence, and fell into the hands of Captain (now General) O'Donahue; from him your son was made over to me, and I adopted him; but having been recognised, when at school, by Furness, the schoolmaster of the village, he absconded to avoid being apprehended; and I have never seen him from that time till yesterday morning, when I called upon him, and had an interview, as soon as his mother, Mrs. Austin, had quitted the cell in Exeter jail, where he is at present confined.'

Austin started—here was the cause of Mrs. Austin's absence explained; neither could he any longer refuse to admit that Joey was his son. After a silence of a minute, he replied—

'I have to thank you much for your kindness to my poor boy, Major M'Shane; and truly sorry am I that he is in such a dilemma. Now that I am acquainted with it, I shall do all in my power. There are other Rushbrooks, gentlemen, and you cannot be surprised at my not immediately admitting that such a disgrace has occurred to my own family. Of Mrs. Austin having been with him I assure you I had not any idea; her having gone there puts it beyond a doubt, although it has been carefully concealed from me till this moment.'

It must not be supposed that because Austin replied so calmly to M. jor M'Shane, that he was calm within. On the contrary, from the very first of the interview he had been in a state of extreme excitement, and the struggle to command his feelings was terrible; indeed, it was

now so rainfully expressed in his countenance, that O Donahue said,—

'Perhaps, Mr Austin, you will allow me to ring for a little water!'

'No, Sir, thank you,' replied Austin, gasping for breath.

'Since you have admitted that Joseph Rushbrook is your son, Mr Austin,' continued M'Shane, 'your own flesh and blood, may I inquire of you what you intend to do in his behalf? Do you intend to allow the law to take its course, and your son to be banished for life?'

'What can I do, gentlemen? He has been tried and condemned; of course, if any exertion on my part can avail—but I fear that there is no chance of that.'

'Mr Austin, if he were guilty I should not have interfered; but, in my opinion he is innocent; do you not think so?'

'I do not believe, Sir, that he ever would have done such a deed; but that avails nothing—he is condemned.'

'I grant it, unless the real murderer of the pedlar could be brought forward.'

'Y-e-s,' replied Austin, trembling.

'Shall I denounce him, Mr Austin?'

'Do you know him?' replied Austin, starting on his feet.

'Yes, Rushbrook, I do know him,—'tis yourself!'

Austin could bear up no longer, he fell down on the floor as if he had been shot. O Donahue and M'Shane went to his assistance, they raised him up, but he was insensible; they then rang the bell for assistance, the servant came in, medical advice was sent for, and M'Shane and O'Donahue, perceiving there was no chance of prosecuting their intentions in Mr Austin's present state, quitted the Hall just as the chaise with Mrs Austin and a Mary drove up to the door.

## CHAPTER THE LAST.

IN WHICH IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT THE STORY WINDS UP TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE READER.

It was not for some time after the arrival of the medical men that Mr Austin could be recovered from his state of insensibility, and when he was at last restored to life, it was not to reason. He raved wildly, and it was pronounced that his attack was a brain fever. As, in his incoherent exclamations, the name of Byres was frequently repeated, as soon as the medical assistance had withdrawn, Mrs. Austin desired all the servants, with the exception of Mary, to quit the room; they did so with reluctance, for their curiosity was excited, and there was shrugging of the shoulders, and whispering, and surmising, and repeating of the words which had escaped from their unconscious master's lips, and hints that all was not right passed from one to the other in the servants' hall. In the meantime, Mrs. Austin and Mary remained with him; and well it was that the servants had been sent away, if they were not to know what had taken place so long ago, for now

Austin played the whole scene over again, denounced himself as a murderer, spoke of his son, and of his remorse, and then he would imagine himself in conflict with Byres—he clenched his fists—and he laughed and chuckled—and then would change again to bitter lamentations for the deed which he had done.

'Oh, Mary, how is this to end?' exclaimed Mrs Austin, after one of the paroxysms had subsided.

'As guilt always must end, Madam,' replied Mary, bursting into tears, and clasping her hands, 'in misery.'

'My dear Mary, do not distress yourself in that manner; you are no longer guilty.'

'Nor is my master, Madam; I am sure that he has repented.'

'Yes, indeed, he has repented most sincerely; one hasty deed has embittered his whole life—he never has been happy since, and never will be until he is in heaven.'

'Oh, what a happy relief it would be to him!' replied Mary, musing. 'I wish that I was—if such wish is not sinful.'

'Mary, you must not add to my distress by talking in that manner—I want your support and consolation now.'

'You have a right to demand everything of me, Madam,' replied Mary, 'and I will do my best, I will indeed. I have often felt this before, and I thank God for it—it will make me more humble.'

The fever continued for many days, during which time Mr Austin was attended solely by his wife and Mary; the latter had written to our hero, stating the cause of her absence from him in so trying a period, and had received an answer, stating that he had received from very good authority the information that he was not likely to leave the country for some weeks—and requesting that Mary would remain with his mother until his father's dangerous illness was decided one way or the other; he stated that he should be perfectly satisfied if he only saw her once before his departure, to arrange with her relative to her affairs, and to give her legal authority to act for him, previous to his removal from the country. He told her that he had perceived an advertisement in the London papers, evidently put in by his friends at Portsmouth, offering a handsome reward to any one who could give any account of him—and that he was fearful that some of those who were at the trial would read it, and make known his position; he begged Mary, to write 'o him every day if possible, if it were only a few lines, and sent his devoted love to his mother. Mary complied with all our hero's requests, and every day a few lines were despatched; and it was now ascertained by the other domestics, and by them made generally known, that a daily correspondence was kept up with a prisoner in Exeter gaol, which added still more mystery and interest in the state of Mr Austin. Many were the calls and cards left at the Hall, and if we were to inquire whether curiosity or condolence was the motive of those who went there, we are afraid that the cause would, not in most cases,



have proved to have been the latter. Among others O'Donahue and M'Shane did not fail to send every day, waiting for the time when they could persuade Austin to do justice to his own child.

The crisis, as predicted by the medical attendants, at last arrived, and Mr Austin recovered his reason, but, at the same time, all hopes of his again rising from his bed were given over. This intelligence was communicated to his wife, who wept and wished, but dared not utter what she wished; Mary, however, took an opportunity, when Mrs Austin had quitted the room, to tell Mr Austin, who was in such a feeble state that he could hardly speak, that the time would soon come when he would be summoned before a higher tribunal, and conjured him by the hopes he had of forgiveness, now that the world was fading away before his eyes, to put away all pride, and to do that justice to his son which our hero's noble conduct towards him demanded—to make a confession, either in writing or in presence of witnesses, before he died, which would prove the innocence of his only child, the heir to the property and the name.

There was a struggle, and a long one, in the proud heart of Mr Austin before he could consent to this act of justice. Mary had pointed out the propriety of it early in the morning, and it was not until late in the evening, after having remained in silence and with his eyes closed for the whole day, that Austin made a sign to his wife to bend down to him, and desired her in a half-whisper to send for a magistrate. His request was immediately attended to; and in an hour the summons was answered by one with whom Austin had been on good terms. Austin made his deposition in few words, and was supported by Mary while he signed the paper. It was done; and when she would have removed the pen from his fingers, she found that it was still held fast and that his head had fallen back; the conflict between his pride and this act of duty had been too overpowering for him in his weak condition, and Mr Austin was dead before the ink had time to dry.

The gentleman who had been summoned in his capacity of magistrate thought it advisable to remove from the scene of distress without attempting to communicate with Mrs Austin in her present distress. He had been in conversation with O'Donahue and M'Shane at the time that he was summoned, and Mr Austin's illness and the various reports abroad had been there canvassed. O'Donahue and M'Shane had preserved the secret; but when their friend was sent for, anticipating that some such result would take place, they requested him to return to them from the Hall; he did so, and acquainted them with what had passed.

'There is no time to lose, then,' said M'Shane; 'I will, if you please, take a copy of this deposition.'

O'Donahue entered into a brief narrative of the circumstances and the behavior of our hero; and, as soon as the copy of the deposition had been attested by the magistrate, he and

M'Shane ordered horses, and set off for London. They knocked up Mr Trevor at his private house in the middle of the night, and put the document into his hands.

'Well, Major M'Shane,' said Mr Trevor, after he had perused the deposition, 'I would gladly have risen from a sick bed to have had this paper put into my hands; we must call upon the Secretary of State to-morrow, and I have no doubt but that the poor lad will be speedily released, take possession of his property, and be an honor to the county.'

'An honor to old England,' replied M'Shane; 'but I shall now wish you good night.'

M'Shane, before he went to bed, immediately wrote a letter to Mrs Austin, acquainting her with what he had done, and the intentions of Mr Trevor, sending it by express; he simply stated the facts, without any comments.

But we must now return to Portsmouth. The advertisement of Mr Small did not escape the keen eye of the police constable who had arrested our hero. As the reader must recollect, the arrest was made so quietly that no one was aware of the circumstances; and as the reward of £100 would be a very handsome addition to the £200 which he had already received, the man immediately set off for Portsmouth on the outside of the coach, and went to Mr Small, whom he found in the counting-house with Mr Sleek. He soon introduced himself, and his business with them; and such was Mr Small's impatience, that he immediately signed a cheque for the amount, and handed it to the police-officer, who then bluntly told him that our hero had been tried and sentenced to transportation for murder, his real name being Rushbrook, and not O'Donahue.

This was a heavy blow to Mr Small: having obtained all the particulars from the police-constable he dismissed him, and was for sometime in consultation with Mr Sleek; and as it would be impossible long to withhold the facts, it was thought advisable that Mrs. Phillips and Emma should become acquainted with them immediately, the more so as Emma had acknowledged that there was a mystery about our hero, a portion of which she was acquainted with.

Mrs Phillips was the first party to whom the intelligence was communicated, and she was greatly distressed. It was some time before she could decide upon whether Emma, in her weak state, should be made acquainted with the melancholy tidings, but as she suffered so much from suspense, it was considered advisable that the communication should be made. It was done as cautiously as possible; Emma was not so shocked as they supposed she would have been at the intelligence.

'I have been prepared for this, or something like this,' replied she, weeping in her mother's arms; 'but I cannot believe he did the deed; he told me that he did not when he was a child; he asserted it since. Mother, I must—I will go and see him.'

'See him, my child! he is confined in gaol.'

'Do not refuse me, mother, you know not what I feel—you know not—I never knew my-



self till now how much I loved him. See him I must and will. Dearest mother, if you value my life—if you would not drive reason from its seat, do not refuse me!’

Mrs. Phillips found that it was in vain to argue, and consulted with Mr. Small, who at length (after having in vain remonstrated with Emma,) decided that her request should be granted, and that very day he accompanied his niece, travelling all night, until they arrived at Exeter.

In the meantime Mrs. Austin had remained in a state of great distress, her husband lay dead, she believed he had confessed his guilt, but to what extent she did not know, for neither she nor Mary had heard what had passed between him and the magistrate. She had no one but Mary to confide in or to console her; no one to advise with or consult. She thought of sending for the magistrate, but it would appear indecorous, and she was all anxiety and doubt. The letter from M’Shane, which arrived the next afternoon, relieved her at once; she felt that her boy was safe.

‘Mary, dear, read this he is safe!’ exclaimed she; ‘God of heaven accept a mother’s grateful tears!’

‘Cannot you spare me, madam?’ replied Mary, returning the letter.

‘Spare you. Oh yes! quick Mary, lose not a moment, go to him, and take this letter with you. My dear, dear child!’

Mary did not wait a second command; she sent for post horses, and in half an hour was on her way to Exeter; travelling with as much speed as Emma and her uncle, she arrived there but a few hours after them.

Our hero had been anxiously awaiting Mary’s daily communication, the post time had passed, and no letter had arrived. Pale and haggard from long confinement and distress of mind, he was pacing up and down, when the bolts were turned, and Emma, supported by her uncle, entered the cell. At the sight of her our hero uttered a cry, and staggered against the wall; he appeared to have lost his usual self-control.

‘Oh!’ said he, ‘this might have been spared me; I have not deserved this punishment. Emma, hear me. As I hope for future happiness, I am innocent! I am—I am, indeed!’ and he fell senseless on the pavement.

Mr. Small, raised him up and put him on the bed; after a time he revived, and remained where he had been laid, sobbing convulsively.

When he became more composed, Emma, who had been sitting by him, the tears coursing each other down her pale cheeks, addressing him in a calm voice,—

‘I feel—I am sure—that you are innocent, or I should not have been here.’

‘Bless you for that, Emma! bless you!’ cried our hero, ‘those few words of yours have given me more consolation than you can imagine. Is it nothing to be treated as a felon, to be disgraced, to be banished to a distant country, and that at the very time that I was full of happiness, prosperous and anticipating—but I cannot dwell upon that. Is it not hard to bear, Emma? And what could support me, but the conscious-

ness of my own innocence, and the assurance that she whom I love so, and whom I now lose forever, still believes me so? Yes, it is a balm—a consolation, and I will now submit to the will of heaven.’

Emma burst into tears, leaning her face on our hero’s shoulder. After a time she replied, ‘Am I not to be pitied? Is it nothing to love tenderly, devotedly, madly—to have given my heart, my whole thoughts, my existence to one object—(why should I conceal it now?)—to have been dwelling upon visions of futurity so pleasing, so delightful, all passing away as a dream and leaving a sad reality like this? Make me one promise; you will not refuse Emma—she who knelt by your side when you first met her—she who is kneeling before you now!’

‘I dare not, Emma,’ returned Joey, ‘for my heart tells me that you would propose a step which must not be; you must leave me now, and for ever.’

‘For ever! for ever!’ cried Emma, springing on her feet. ‘No! no!—uncle, he says I am to leave him forever!’ cried the frantic girl.—‘Who’s that?—Mary! Yes, it is! Mary, he says I must leave him for ever!’ (It was Mary, who had just come into the cell.) ‘Must I, Mary?’

‘No—no!’ replied Mary, ‘not so! he is saved, and his innocence is established; he is yours for ever!’

We shall not attempt to describe a scene which we could not do justice to. We must allow the day to pass away; during which Emma and our hero, M’Shane, and Mary were sitting together; tears of misery wiped away—tears of joy still flowing and glistening with the radiance of intermingling smiles.

The next morning M’Shane and O’Donahue arrived, the Secretary of State had given immediate orders for our hero’s release, and they had brought the document with them.

The following day they were *en route*, Emma and her uncle to Portsmouth, where they anxiously awaited the arrival of our hero as soon as he had performed his duty to his parents.

We must once more allow the reader to suppose the joy of Mrs Austin in once more holding her child in her embrace, and the smiles and happiness of Mary at his triumphant acquittal; the wondering of the domestics, the scandal and rumor of the neighborhood. Three days sufficed to make all known, and by that time Joey was looked upon as the hero of a novel. On the fourth day he accompanied the remains of his father as chief mourner. The funeral was quiet without being mean, there was no attendance; no carriages of the neighboring gentry followed. Our hero was quite alone and unsupported, but when the ceremony was over, the want of respect shown to the memory of his father was more than atoned for by the kindness and consideration shown towards the son, who was warmly yet delicately welcomed as the future proprietor of the Hall.

Three months passed away, and there was a great crowd before the house of Mr. Small, navy agent, at Portsmouth. There was a large

company assembled, the O'Donahues, the M'Shanes, the Spikemans, and many others. Mrs. Austin was there looking ten years younger, and Mary was attending her at the toilet, both of them half smiles, half tears, for it was the morning of our hero's wedding day. Mr. Small strutted about in white smalls, and Mr. Sleek spluttered over everybody. The procession went to the church, and soon after one couple of the party set off for the Hall; where the others went was of no consequence.

We have now wound up the history of little Joey Rushbrook, the poacher. We have only to add, that the character of our hero was not the worse as he grew older and was the father of a family. The Hall was celebrated for hospitality, for the amiability of its possessors, and the art which they possessed of making other people happy. Mary remained with them more as a confidant than as a servant; indeed, she had so much money, that she received several offers of marriage, which she invariably refused, observing with the true humbleness of a con-

trite heart, that she was undeserving of any honest, good man. Everybody else, even those who knew her history, thought otherwise; but Mary continued firm in her resolution. As for all the rest of the personages introduced into these pages, they passed through life with an average portion of happiness, which is all that can be expected.

In conclusion, we have only one remark to make. In this story we have shown how a young lad who began his career with poaching ultimately became a gentleman of £7000 a year; but we must remind our youthful readers, that it does not follow that every one who thus commences life is to have the same good fortune.—We advise them, therefore, not to attempt it, as they may find that, instead of £7000 a year, they may stand a chance of going to where our hero very narrowly escaped from being sent; that is, to a certain portion of her Majesty's dominions beyond the seas, latterly termed Australia, but more generally known by the appellation of Botany Bay.

#### NEW WORK, BY THE AUTHOR OF VALENTINE VOX.

WITH OCCASIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

#### GEORGE ST. GEORGE JULIAN,—THE PRINCE.

#### PART XIV.—CHAPTER XXII.

##### THE CONSULTATION.

Having read this letter of O. P. Q., so distinctly proving the correctness of his conjectures, George felt quite certain that all was secure; and as the solicitor on perusing it was equally sanguine, it was considered expedient to have counsel's opinion upon it at once. They therefore immediately proceeded to the chambers of the counsel engaged in the suit—one of the first equity lawyers of the day—and when the following morning had been fixed for the consultation, George returned with the view of communicating to Fred the important information which the letter contained.

Fred of course was delighted. He felt that every hope he had inspired was now about to be realised indeed; and his expressions of thankfulness to George, although ardent in the extreme, very certainly not more warm than sincere.

'But who could have employed this man?' he exclaimed; 'this person—this vile O. P. Q.'

'Your cousin, of course!' replied George.

'Surely not,' he rejoined: 'surely he would never dream of an action so base!'

'Is there any other man in existence, with the exception of this O. P. Q., whose interests could be promoted by its accomplishment?—Have you any knowledge of such a man?'

'I certainly have not.'

'Then I think it abundantly clear that this person was prompted by him. I am not, I hope, too prone to jump at conclusions prejudicial to any man; but this is in my view so palpable, that I cannot even entertain a doubt. The property rests between you and him, and the entry

of this marriage alone could complete the chain of evidence required to establish your claim.—That link has been removed. At whose suggestion? Who is likely to have suggested its removal? Who but your cousin Joseph! What other man could deem it worth his while to give four hundred pounds, Fred, to have it removed?'

'It does look suspicious.'

'Suspicious! the thing is certain. But do you know this hand? It strikes me I have seen something like it before.'

'It is a disguised hand evidently.'

'It is; still I think that I have seen it before. However, the thing is sufficiently straightforward now to render success no longer doubtful. We have nothing to fear; we have but to prosecute the matter with spirit, and the day is our own.'

Fred held the same opinion, and while George was making arrangements for remaining a few days in town, he hastened with the letter to Julia and Helen, who, in eloquent terms, expressed the pleasure and the pain they at once derived from its perusal. It was, however, precisely of course what they had expected. Oh! they felt sure that it would be so from what George had told them! He had said that the thing would turn out to be thus, and therefore they could have no doubt upon the subject. And he was indeed their oracle, while the confidence they had in his judgment and zeal was so unbounded, that the fact of his taking a matter in hand—however hopeless its accomplishment might to others appear—was sufficient to enable them to feel well convinced of the result being perfectly successful. They hence viewed Fred as a rich man already, and the warm congratulations of Helen that evening delighted him more than

the prospect of wealth which he then had in view.

Having made all necessary arrangements, George and Fred, at the hour appointed the following morning, attended at the chambers of counsel, and were immediately introduced by their attorney to an eccentric individual who repudiated all such clothing as might tend to impart beauty to his person, and who evidently held a tight fit in especial contempt. His professional coat was particularly greasy, and while his trousers hung about him as loosely as if they had been designed for a man nearly double his size, there existed an aperture of several inches at the waist, through which bulged a very fair proportion of his linen, apparently anxious to be aired. He was a person, notwithstanding this foppery—and it was evident that he prided himself as much upon the style of his dress as the most affected exquisite of the age—whose talent was so conspicuously developed, that he could neither look nor speak without inducing the conviction of his being no ordinary man. He was, moreover, excessively polite; nay, he might have appeared graceful had his clothes fitted better; but as they really didn't show his figure off to any advantage at all, he looked, while performing his courteous evolutions, as if he had made up his mind then and there, to give himself one good shake, and thus to get rid of the incumbrance altogether.

After making a few brief preliminary observations, the attorney placed O. P. Q.'s letter before him, and of all the faces that ever were made up by man, those which he, of course unconsciously, presented to their view while perusing this letter, were of a character the most extraordinary. He tortured his muscles in the most remarkable manner, and twisted them about with amazing facility. Now would his shaggy brows be pursed with surpassing tightness, then his thick nether-lip would jut boldly out in the shape of a spoon, anon one entire side of his face would be screwed up precisely as if he intended to telegraph a wink to the most remote quarter of the globe: in short, no man, either in ancient or modern times, ever witnessed grimaces at all comparable with them. George dared not look at him; and while the attorney very properly tried to preserve his usual aspect of solemnity, the effects which Fred made to suppress a loud laugh—which he feared would burst forth after all—were so strong, that they threw him into a most unpleasant state of perspiration.

Having sufficiently dwelt upon the various points which the letter suggested, this remarkable person proceeded to advise that a motion on affidavits, embodying all the circumstances of the case, should be forthwith made before the Lord Chancellor, who would in all probability direct an issue to try the question of the entry of the marriage—although it might be necessary to obtain the consent of the Ecclesiastical Court to the removal of the registry to London, with a view to the reproduction of the original entry—a course which he stated would be highly advantageous, seeing that while it would show the opposite party what important information

they possessed, it might induce them to make such overtures as might tend to an immediate settlement.

As this view was highly approved by George, Fred, and the attorney, who entirely lost sight of the eccentricities of the man, while hearing him deliver his opinion, it was decided at once that that course should be pursued, and the consultation ended.

The first step now was to procure the affidavits, and with this view George and the attorney, who felt a great interest in the case, paid a visit to the curate, to whom, after having prepared him by briefly explaining its contents, they handed the letter for his perusal.

The curate trembled as the letter was placed in his hand, but made no observation: nor did he utter a syllable until he had read every word, when he exclaimed, 'It is all too true!'

'Now,' said George, 'notwithstanding we have proceeded thus far, I do not believe that this affair will be made public; unless, therefore, you desire Mr. Whomp and Mr. Swiggles to see this letter, it is not at all necessary that its contents should be known even to them.'

'Oh, but I should wish them to see it,' returned the curate. 'I should wish them to know how the book was obtained; for although I do not believe that they would think evil of me, it is possible that I may be suspected of having a guilty knowledge of the matter.'

'Well then,' said George, 'as we require them to make affidavits in confirmation of yours, you will probably send for them at once?'

'Certainly replied the curate, who called to a man who was working in the garden, and having given him the necessary instructions, rang the bell for the housekeeper.

'Mrs. Jones,' said he calmly, but with the most impressive earnestness, as she entered the room, 'Mrs. Jones, I am sorry to say that I have reason to fear that the confidence I have reposed in you has been to a certain extent misplaced. I will not, however condemn you without a hearing, and in order that you may be the better able to defend yourself, I will read to you the precise terms in which the accusation is conveyed, begging of you, whether you are innocent or guilty, to adhere with solemn strictness to the truth.'

He then turned to that part of the letter in which the writer stated that by virtue of bribery he managed through her instrumentality to obtain private interviews with Lydia, and having read it distinctly, he added, 'Is this true or not?'

Mrs. Jones made no sort of reply; she covered her face with her apron, and wept, but she uttered no word.

'Did you or did you not,' he demanded with awful solemnity, 'accept a bribe from that bad man whose presence we have all so much reason to deplore?'

Mrs. Jones was still silent.

'Did you, or did you no', Mrs. Jones,' pursued the curate, 'sanction private interviews, in consequence, between him and my poor Lydia?'

Mrs. Jones sobbed aloud, but returned no answer.

'I am sorry,' said the curate, 'to say, that I am ashamed of your conduct, Mrs. Jones. You may retire.'

It will perhaps be abundantly manifest to many that Mrs. Jones might have made a much better defence; and an opinion may be hazarded that had she employed counsel she would have adopted a different course; but as she hadn't, she didn't: she thus left the room sobbing with bitterness and zeal.

The curate now began to explain how firmly he had relied on the discretion of Mrs. Jones, and when he had ventured to illustrate the fact that men are occasionally most deceived by those in whom they happen to have reposed the most confidence, Whomp and his little friend Swiggles arrived.

As they entered, George rose and shook hands with them both, and when he had explained to them the object of his visit, he read the important letter aloud.

At first Swiggles, assuming a highly authoritative aspect, sat firmly in his chair, with his cheek upon his hand, as if nothing had the power to amaze or to move him; but as George proceeded, he warmed upon the subject, and became extremely fidgetty, while Whomp scratched his ear and interposed a variety of novel ejaculations having a tendency to show that his firm opinion was that the nature of things must soon change.

'The world's too far gone!' he exclaimed, when George had read the whole of the letter. 'We must have another universal deluge to wash all this artfulness away!'

'But what a villain he must be!' observed Swiggles.

'A villain!' echoed Whomp. 'It's enough to make a man's flesh crawl off his bones.'

'Now, gentlemen,' said George, 'as we can only proceed on affidavits, of course you will willingly state all you know having reference to the change in the color of the ink?'

'Most undoubtedly,' replied Mr. Swiggles; 'and I'll also state just what I think of the whole concern.'

'And so will I,' added Whomp: 'I'd go to the world's end to punish that unheard-of wretch. It's enough to make the eagles come down and peck our eyes out. I wonder we are suffered to live upon the earth at all!'

The attorney smiled and proceeded to business; but while preparing the affidavits, he utterly astonished both Swiggles and Whomp by his indisposition to follow their eloquent comments on the facts. They couldn't at all understand it. They wished him to state their opinions in full—to describe what they thought of this base individual, and how in their judgment he ought to be served. This they held to be essential to the due course of justice, and were highly dissatisfied on being informed that all that was required of them was a plain straightforward statement of facts.

Their affidavits were consequently short, for all they absolutely knew of the matter had reference solely to the fading of the ink: still they tended to strengthen the affidavit of the curate,

which was drawn at considerable length, as it embodied nearly the whole of the facts, and when ever thing requisite had been accomplished, George and the attorney returned to town.

Two other affidavits were then made—one by George and the other by Fred; and on the following day, notice of motion was served on the opposite parties, to whom copies of all the affidavits were voluntarily supplied, and the consequence was an application on the part of the solicitor of Joseph Broadbridge, to postpone the motion for ten days, in order that he might have an opportunity of communicating with his client, who was stated to be then out of town—an application which was at once entertained, it being believed that in the interim overtures would be made, and the motion was postponed for ten days accordingly.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### JULIA AND HELEN VISIT THE VILLAGE.

As Lydia's afflicting case had excited a considerable degree of curiosity in the minds of Julia and Helen, they now endeavored to prevail upon George to take them down to the village, in order that they might not only see the poor girl, but invite her and the curate to spend a few days with them in town.

To this George at first felt indisposed to accede—at least he thought the invitation had better be deferred—but as he subsequently considered that the presence of the curate might soon be required in London, he as a matter of policy, consented to go with them on the following day.

In the morning they accordingly started, and on reaching the inn at which George and Fred had previously put up, they had some slight refreshment, ordered dinner for six, and then proceeded on foot towards the village.

'How dearly,' said Julia, as they walked across the fields in the full enjoyment of the calm scene around them, 'how dearly I should like to see the shepherd of whom you spoke.'

'Oh! that would be indeed a treat!' exclaimed Helen.

'There he is,' said George, 'sitting in his old position, and under the same tree. I wonder what on earth such a man has to occupy his mind? We'll approach him.'

They did so; and the old man rose, and on recognising George, bowed respectfully, and said,—

'Your most obedient. Lovely weather, For you and the ladies to walk out together.'

'The weather is beautiful enough,' said George smiling; 'but a woman is a troublesome creature to walk with, as you are aware.'

'She's like an angel, beautiful;  
And when she's also dutiful,  
Her duty imparts a new light to her beauty—  
For nothing so well becomes beauty as duty—'

Her heart is lighter,  
Her eyes are brighter;  
And he who would blight her,  
Or fright her,



Or slight her,  
Deserves to be tied by the leg, even tighter  
Than he who has no sense or reason to guide him;  
And, when tied, all right-minded men should deride him.'

'You are very severe,' observed George.—  
'But you speak of her duty. What do you imagine her duty to be?'

Why, as a wife—  
And, upon my life,  
I think that a bride  
Is now by your side.  
You'll pardon me  
For being so free;

I'm an old man, madam, as you may see,  
And probably privileged free to be.  
But, to return: she, as a wife,  
Should, throughout life, abhor all strife.  
Be gentle, loving, faithful, mild,  
And never let her thoughts run wild.  
If matters should by chance go wrong,  
Why she should hope that things ere long  
Will change: but she should ne'er complain,  
For at such times men feel most pain.  
If she with children should be blest,  
'Tis well: if not, why let her rest  
Content; for if our joys they double,  
They also bring us double trouble.  
Whatever the state of her husband's purse,  
Whether quite full or the reverse,  
To him should she fondly cling till death,  
And bless him with her latest breath.'

'And now,' said Julia, archly, 'what is in your view the duty of a husband?'

'My opinion is this—  
He should kiss

No miss,  
If he dreams of a life of connubial bliss.  
All roving desires within him should perish,  
His wife he should fondly love, honor, and cherish.  
It should be his pride  
In her faith to confide.

He should also be generous, virtuous, and brave;  
Bear up against crosses,  
And all sorts of losses,

Which is, ever has been, and will be for ever, the best  
way to smoothe the rough path to the grave.  
Let a man run away  
From a trouble to-day,  
And to-morrow 'twill follow him hot.  
Whereas, should he face it,  
And, if it turn, chase it,  
He'll see it go off like a shot.

MORAL.

He who the blows of misfortune can't parry.  
Receives them all flush, and ought never to marry.

'That's very correct,' said George. 'But do you not think that the ladies in general are treated too kindly?'

'He who is ironical  
Is always economical

In dealing what he deems just praise,  
When they are present whom he loves to raise.  
I've often seen men ardent in the cause  
Of those for whom they have not cared two straws;  
While others have most warmly stigmatised  
The very virtues they most highly prized.'

'He is well understood,' observed Julia.

'Of that I've no doubt.  
You would probably pout,  
If you fancied he meant  
That he'd cause to repent,  
Or to vent

An ill feeling: but that's not his bent.'

'But tell me,' said George, 'how do you

amuse yourself day after day? What have you to think of?'

'A man plays many parts in fourscore years,  
Fews many joys—sheds many bitter tears:  
Hopes wither; bosom friends around him fall,  
Whom to his mind at least he can recall,  
With all the castles which he built in the air,  
And found when perfect that they were not there.  
These things a calm reflecting man will find  
Ample sufficient to amuse his mind.  
And if in these his interest should abate,  
Let him look forward to a future state.  
What will it be? The imagination swells  
Where'er on this dread mystery it dwells,  
In that alone a man finds ample scope  
For contemplation, teeming with sweet hope.'

'You are right, my friend, quite right,' said George; at the same time making him a liberal present. 'Your mind, I perceive need not be unemployed. Farewell.'

'Farewell, sir!—ladies fare ye well!  
Oa gratitude I will not dwell.  
But as mine is without alloy,

I wish you health, wealth, peace, and joy!'

He then bowed profoundly, and when the ladies, who were delighted, had taken their leave, the party proceeded towards the village.

'Well,' said George, having got some distance from him; 'what think you of the shepherd?—Has he realized your anticipations?'

'Oh, yes!' replied Julia, 'he has indeed exceeded them. I did not expect that his rhymes would flow so freely.'

'Had not the subjects been suggested at the moment,' observed Helen, 'I should have been inclined to imagine that he got the lines by rote. But of course that is perfectly impossible: he could not have known, if he had even expected us, what sort of questions were about to be proposed.'

'And especially,' added Julia, 'such questions as those put by George. But he really is a dear of an old man; I should like to come down here occasionally, if it were only to hear him

They now approached the cottage, with the lovely appearance of which Julia and Helen were charmed; but as they entered the garden and saw poor Lydia adjusting a stand of geraniums, while the curate was reading in the arbor, all their interest was immediately centered in them.

Lydia was the first to hear their footsteps as they walked up the newly gravelled path, and turned suddenly round; but instead of rushing wildly to George, and throwing her arms round his neck as before, she flew, as if for protection, to the curate, who at once rose to meet them.

'I have a thousand apologies to make for this intrusion,' said George.

'I am far too happy to see you to need one,' replied the curate; 'I knew that you would not keep me long in suspense.'

Julia and Helen were then presented, and after gracefully complimenting the curate on the beauty of the cottage, they took Lydia's arm, and promenaded the garden, while George was explaining what progress had been made.

'You have just come in time, dears!' said Lydia: 'I am so delighted to see you!—It is to



be to-morrow' she added, in a confidential whisper, assuming an expression of ecstasy.—'Oh! it will be such joy—we shall all be so happy.

Here she passionately kissed them and burst into tears.

Both Julia and Helen, while endeavoring to soothe her, wept too; but this she no sooner saw than she turned to comfort them; she embraced them, and kissed them, and wiped away their tears, and begged of them in tones of surpassing sweetness to be calm.

'My tears are tears of joy!' she added, 'I weep because I am so happy, so very, very happy.' And then she wept again.

The curate now joined them, and having invited them to enter the cottage to take some refreshments, intimated that it would be at least an hour before they dined.

'You are aware, of course,' said Julia, 'that we hope to have the pleasure of your company, and that of dear Lydia, at the inn?'

'I had forgotten to name it while speaking of business,' said George, who came up at the moment; 'but you must do us the favor to dine with us to-day?'

'Had you not better remain here?' observed the curate.

'Oh, no,' replied George; come, the change will do you good, and I'm sure that it will be greatly beneficial to Lydia. The dinner is already ordered.'

'Yes; do return with us,' said Julia, 'much as I am delighted with this little paradise of yours, you must not detain us to-day. Do favor us? You will go?'

The curate consented, and they entered the cottage, where they had some seed-cake and home-made wine; and when Lydia, whose mind had become much more tranquil, was ready, they proceeded across the fields towards the inn.

As Julia took the arm of the curate she had of course an opportunity of conversing with him on the subject of his daughter's affliction, and as this conversation led to the object of her visit, she explained to him that object, and expressed an earnest hope that she might in a very few days have the pleasure of receiving them in town.

The curate endeavored to excuse himself by stating that he seldom left the village—that he felt his social qualities to be poor—that they would find his society uninteresting and dull—and that he could not for a moment think of troubling them with the care of his poor afflicted child; but Julia was indisposed to receive any excuse, and endeavored to overrule all his objections.

'I do not pretend,' she observed, 'to any peculiar knowledge of the mind; I do not pretend to any skill in the removal of those diseases which are incidental to it; but I do notwithstanding believe that if Lydia were to live but a short time with me, the change would tend to restore her.

The curate moved his head sorrowfully and sighed.

'Unless,' said he, after a pause, 'it please God to restore her, all hope of restoration is vain.'

'Will you pardon me,' said Julia, with great deference, 'if what I am about to urge be improper?'

The curate gazed at her for a moment, and then motioned her to proceed.

'Dependence upon the great Author of our being,' she continued, 'is our first and greatest duty: we are taught to place our whole trust and confidence in Him. But should we, when affliction assails us, be passive?—should we set aside those means of restoration at our command, instead of employing them and praying to him to render them effectual? But I feel that I am too presumptuous—'

'Not at all! not at all!' said the curate. 'I like to hear you, because I find that while employing those means, you would confide notwithstanding in His mercy. I must not be understood to mean that if calamities befall us we should make no effort to remove them; if I had entertained that belief I should not have made the exertions I have made with a view to the removal of poor Lydia's affliction; but when every effort we have the power to make proves vain, the conviction follows that restoration depends upon His will alone.'

'I have not the slightest doubt,' rejoined Julia, 'that all you believed you had the power to do has been done in this case; but have you ever tried change of scene?'

'Why I cannot say that it has ever been fairly tried.'

'Well then, let it be fairly tried now. Do let me prevail upon you to visit us if it be but for a week. I think that I can perceive a change in her already, and I am sure that a week's residence with us—if it should not completely restore her—will do her an immense deal of good. Say that you will come?'

The curate promised to 'turn it over in his mind,' and soon after this promise was given they arrived at the inn, where Julia and Helen retired with Lydia, who became before dinner was announced quite calm and collected. Her questions were rational, while her answers were strictly to the point, and although she still labored under the delusion that she was going to be married 'to-morrow'—which to-morrow was to have been every day during the previous twelvemonth—there was nothing fantastic or wild in her observations, while she evidently appreciated the affectionate attentions of her new friends highly.

During dinner she was silent. The novelty of the position in which she was placed—for to her the position was novel—seemed to make her apprehensive of committing herself, and whenever she made any slight mistake, induced by the embarrassment of the moment, the consciousness of it would cause her to blush so deeply that her neck arms, and face were absolutely crimson.

This sensitiveness tended to convince all but the curate, that her mind's disease was not too deeply rooted to be removed, and although her embarrassment was apparently unnoticed—for she glanced at them all constantly with the view of ascertaining if that which she felt to be her awkwardness was observed—Julia managed to

make the curate, who sat on her right, admit that a change of scene was calculated to be highly beneficial, and having accomplished that, she very soon induced him to promise to spend a week at least with them in town.

'You have never been in London, dear, have you?' said Julia, when this promise had been obtained.

'Never,' replied Lydia; 'but I am going to-morrow.'

'You will be delighted with the place, I am sure!'

'That I am convinced of. We are going directly we come from church to-morrow.'

'You will call upon us?'

'That I will!' replied the affectionate girl, as the tears came into her eyes. 'I would not neglect to do that for the world! You are so good, so kind! and I am *indeed* grateful—very grateful—you do not know how dearly I love you.—Bless you! bless all! I am happy—very—very happy now; but I shall be more happy to-morrow.'

There was a tear in every eye: and every heart was filled with sympathy: they could have wept like children; but made a strong effort to conceal their emotions—an effort which by virtue of George changing the subject, was successful.

They then freely conversed on the various topics of the day—Julia and Helen exciting the curiosity of Lydia, while George and Fred inspired the curate with wonder, until the time for their departure had arrived, when they took leave of the good old man and his daughter—whose heart they had evidently won—and returned to town with feelings of intense satisfaction.

#### PART XIV.—CHAPTER XXIV.

IN WHICH GEORGE BECOMES DEEPLY INVOLVED.

It being now essential to the progress of this history to return to Sir Richard, Julia's father, it will, in the first place be proper to state that nothing having reference to the marriage of his daughter annoyed him so much as the fact of his never having been applied to for assistance. He would have been delighted—incredible as it may to the virtuous appear—had his child, his only child, been reduced to actual beggary in order that he might have trampled upon her feelings and pointed to the fulfilment of his prediction with an air of triumph. Letters had been sent to him by Julia, with a view to his reconciliation—she had implored his forgiveness, and prayed for permission to crave his blessing on her knees, but in vain; her destitution alone could content him: an application for pecuniary assistance was that which he panted to receive; but as assistance was not required, no such application came.

Now it has been observed that Sir Richard during the war had been engaged in the iron trade in which, by virtue of a series of successful speculations, he realised a very considerable fortune; but it has yet to be mentioned that af-

ter his retirement from business, a great portion of his property was invested in a coal mine in Northumberland, which had been for many years highly productive, and which continued to yield the proprietor immense profits, with every prospect of its value being increased. The position of this mine was immediately on the coast, and the proprietors had caused it to be worked a considerable distance under the sea, beneath which the chief basin was situated, for the farther they went, the more valuable the seams became; while the dip being immense, and the superincumbent strata forming an arch which seemed to defy the ponderous weight of the ocean above, they were still tempted onwards, until one fatal morning, while the workmen at the extremity were blasting a huge piece of coal, the sea rushed in upon them, drowned three hundred men, and destroyed the mine forever.

This calamity reduced many of the proprietors to utter destitution; and although Sir Richard was not quite so deeply involved, it occurred at a time when other circumstances had conspired to render his mind ill-calculated to bear it. He had just lost twenty thousand pounds by the treasurer of the county, and another defaulter for whom he was surety had induced him to incur liabilities to the extent of twenty thousand more and therefore when the heavy news of the destruction of the mine arrived, it drove him almost mad.

It also happened at this particular period, that Fred's cousin Joseph, for reasons which will sufficiently appear anon, offered to point out to Tynte—with whom he had been for some considerable time connected—means by which he might have his revenge upon George, and enrich himself at the same time, intimating that whatever money might be required for the purpose he would willingly supply, on the understanding that if the affair succeeded it should be deemed to be a fair set off against any claim which Tynte might conceive he had upon him.

Being highly indignant with George, and of course always anxious to enrich himself, no matter by what means, Tynte readily consented, and expressed his anxiety for an immediate explanation. This, however, did not suit the views of Joseph Broadbridge, who endeavored to excuse himself on the ground that secrecy was so absolutely essential to success that it would be inexpedient to explain more than one step at a time.

'But I presume,' said Tynte, 'that I shall be as much interested in preserving secrecy as you will!'

'I propose no advantage to myself,' returned Joseph, 'I do it for your sake solely.'

'Then what do you take me for?' cried Tynte, who invariably when addressing him, felt himself privileged to assume a blustering tone, 'do you take me for a child or a fool? I am a man of the world, and you know it! Do you think I'll consent to be led step by step in the dark? How do I know where you would lead me?'

'I would lead you on to fortune!—that's my only object!'

'Well then, why not explain at once how it is to be done? What's the first step?'

'Why I'd propose that in the first place apartments be taken in some quiet part of the town, and that flaming advertisements, offering to advance sums of money on good personal security be inserted in all the London papers.'

'What, in order that Julian may be caught? Do you think him such an idiot?'

'No; but I think that he would discount some of the bills thus obtained, and be thereby let in pretty deeply.'

'Not he,' replied Tynte. 'He's too cautious. You don't know the man.'

'But don't you think that if a bill of one of his friends were to be brought to him for discount, he'd do it if he felt that it was safe?'

'Why yes, that I believe. I believe that he would do such a bill if he thought that there was even a chance of its being safe.'

'Very well then: the channel through which I'll undertake to send some of these advertisements will bring back such bills! Of that I feel certain. Will you try it?'

'Oh, I'll try it. But how am I to get them to him? I can't take them: nor will he have any thing to do with them if he should know that they come through to my hands.'

'Procure them first. We'll find means to get them to him. Neither you nor your name need appear.'

Very well. Tynte thought this clear and straightforward enough. It was an old game of his; he had played it again and again with success, and therefore of course set to work *con amore*; engaged apartments in a certain quiet street leading out of the New-road in the name of Mordaunt, and sent forth his advertisements which, as usual, were of the most tempting character.

Joseph, whose latent object was to cause both Tynte and George to be transported, conceiving their utter destruction to be essential to his own security, now commenced action. He had been, ever since the reward was offered for information on the subject of the register, constantly tortured by Tynte, whose threatening demands swelled beyond the power of supply; but when the affidavits had been made, and he knew what important information had been obtained, he saw that in accomplishing the object he had in view, no time was to be lost.

He therefore, immediately after Tynte's advertisements appeared, having made himself acquainted with the whole of the circumstances connected with George's marriage, as well as with the fact that Sir Richard was sinking, in a pecuniary sense, beneath the weight of his accumulated misfortunes, requested a friend of his who lived near Sir Richard, and knew him well, to place one of these advertisements in an apparently casual manner before him.

This was done; and the effect was precisely that which Joseph had anticipated.—Sir Richard had many engagements to meet, and feeling that time alone could save him, he answered the advertisement, and after some slight correspondence, in which Tynte succeeded in convincing him that Mordaunt was a man of high respectability, an interview was appointed, of which the

result was, that Tynte on producing ten bill-stamps, induced Sir Richard to accept in blank, promising to remit him the amount on the following Saturday, after deducting interest at the rate of ten per cent per annum.

Having obtained these blank acceptances, Tynte returned to town; but as he immediately afterwards discovered that although the stamps were written across, and made payable at one of the London bankers, Sir Richard had omitted to sign his name—a fact which, in his anxiety to obtain possession of them, Tynte had overlooked, and was ready to cut his throat in consequence—he wrote to him apprising him of the omission, and requesting to know when it would be convenient for him to complete the acceptances which, without his name, were utterly valueless or course.

Tynte's object in writing on this occasion was, to ascertain before he went down, whether anything like suspicion had been excited in the interim; but as the reply of Sir Richard convinced him that no doubt of the correctness of the transaction was entertained, he met him by appointment at the place of their first meeting, five miles from Sir Richard's residence, where the omission was promptly supplied.

It had been agreed between them that the bills should be drawn at six, nine, twelve, fifteen, and eighteen months, but when Tynte returned with them to town, he caused the whole of them to be filled up for five hundred pounds each, at two months, dating them all on the same day, in order that if spoken of, they might appear to be one and the same bill. He then left his new apartments, of course, dropped the name of Mordaunt, and directed the whole of his attention to the process of turning the bills into cash.

Joseph, who had been watching the progress of his scheme with unbounded satisfaction, now informed him of the fact, of which he was previously ignorant, of Sir Richard being the father-in-law of George; and at the same time suggested that if two or three of the bills were to be taken to him for discount, he would do them without hesitation, as a means of effecting a reconciliation between the old knight and his daughter.

This appeared to Tynte to be a most excellent suggestion: he felt that he might thus get rid of two of them at least without making much of a sacrifice; and having thought of Cavendish, he went to him, and stated that two bills had just been placed in his hands for discount, and that as the acceptor was the father-in-law of Julian, he would, in all probability, give cash for them at once.

Cavendish, aware of the feeling which existed between Tynte and George, at once offered to conduct the negotiation, provided he were paid ten per cent. on the amount. These terms were considered by Tynte rather high, but as he eventually agreed to them, Cavendish took the bills, and went direct to George's office, although he scarcely expected to find him there; but as this happened to be the day after the last visit to the curate, when George had made arrangements

for remaining a short time in town, he was fortunate enough to meet him at the office-door.

'Ah! Mr. Julian!' he exclaimed, with his usual display of affectionate warmth. 'Proud to see you! Haven't set eyes on you for a variety of generations. Never call! Rich—artful—wealthy—doing the trick—eh? Well—oh! by the bye,' he added, pulling George in, 'I've a couple of bills here. I don't know the parties, but I'm told they're as safe as the bank. They want me to do them, but I can't. Tin's all locked up—every sixpence. Let me see, I think I've got them about me! I know I had them!—how strange! I thought I put them into my pocket-book—oh! here they are! I thought—no they're not—there's only one. But that'll do. Do you know any thing of them?'

George looked at the acceptance, and started. Even before he had time to read the name, he knew the hand—'Accepted: payable at Messrs. Praeds. Richard Rougholl.'

'I hear,' continued Cavendish, pretending not to notice the surprise manifested by George—'I hear the acceptor is as regular as the sun; but I know nothing of him—do you?'

'I've heard of him,' replied George, carelessly.

'Well, then, you may as well do them. I'd do them myself, but I'm stumped.'

'Is the other accepted by the same man?'

'I believe so. Oh! here is the other.'

'The same date and the same sum,' said George, having examined it. That's very strange. Why couldn't he have given one bill for the whole amount?'

'It was probably done to facilitate the negotiation.'

'Very likely. Well, I'll do them. Do you want the money to-day?'

'I believe that the drawer is anxious to have it as soon as possible.'

'Do you know the drawer?'

'No; they were put into my hands in the regular course of business. I know nothing of either the drawer or the acceptor. The person of whom I received it says he can stand seven and a half per cent on the transaction, so that if you have five, and I take two and half, you know, it'll answer the purpose of all concerned.'

'Well,' said George, 'knowing something of the acceptor, if you'll call in an hour I'll give you the cash.'

'Very well. Then I'll look in again in an hour. By the bye, have you ever heard of that fellow Peter?'

'Oh, yes! I've heard of him.'

'Ah!—Well!—Scamp!—No matter!—Gratitude's dead and defunct in the human heart of man. Let me see—it's now twelve. I'll look in again at one. Adieu!—ta, ta,—I'll not detain you. To a man of your talent time's money.—Adieu!'

'What could he have given these bills for?' said George to himself musing, when Cavendish had left. 'He has perhaps entered into some new speculation—Not unlikely! I'll hold them at all events. They may be the means of bringing about a somewhat better understanding between us. It is strange—very

strange, they should have fallen into my hands!'

And it would have appeared strange to most men, and most men, moreover, in his position would have been equally glad; but his gladness did not partake of any feeling of triumph: it could not; for having heard nothing of Sir Richard's misfortunes, he of course still believed him to be a wealthy man.

Punctually at one o'clock Cavendish returned, and George having in the interim made the necessary arrangements gave him a cheque for the amount. This to the feelings of Mr. Cavendish was highly satisfactory, and of course he immediately got the cheque cashed; not that he entertained the slightest doubt of its being paid when presented, but simply because he had a natural disinclination to let Tynte see it, as he intended to charge double the amount of interest that had been taken by George, independently of the ten per cent. for which he stipulated. Tynte was, notwithstanding, well content; and having informed Mr. Cavendish that he had other bills of the same man's acceptance which he might as well try to get discounted through the same channel in the morning, he called upon Joseph Broadbridge, to whom he explained that the application to George had been successful, and who of course was extremely delighted. He felt that the game was now his own—that he had but to pursue it from that point with promptitude and tact to render failure impossible—and being still determined to lose no time, he wrote to Sir William by that night's post, to inform him that he would do himself the pleasure of waiting upon him, although a stranger, on the following day, to communicate something of great importance in connexion with certain bills which had got into the hands of disreputable people.

By the same post Tynte sent a letter stating that his want of punctuality had arisen in consequence of money being 'terribly short' just then, intimating that the dividends would be paid in a few days, when of course it would be more plentiful, and assuring him that he was using his best exertions to turn the bills into cash, which as far as that went was particularly true.

On receiving these letters, Sir Richard began to feel alarmed, for it was then for the first time that he reflected on the folly, not only of accepting in blank, but of entrusting his acceptances to an absolute stranger, of whose respectability he possessed no other proof than that which the man's own letters afforded. How he could have been such an idiot, he professed himself unable to conceive; and yet who could have supposed that a person of Lordaunt's refined manners, appearance, and command, was not a respectable man!

Endeavouring thus to find some excuse for his folly, he waited the arrival of his correspondent Broadbridge, in a state of the most galling suspense; but punctually at the appointed hour, a post-chaise stopped at the gate, and as Joseph alighted, Sir Richard hastened across the lawn to receive him.

The chaise was then dismissed, and they entered the house, when, as Sir Richard was na-



turally anxious to know all, they proceeded to business at once.

'Now, in the first place,' said Joseph, on opening the conversation, 'you, as a man of the world, will expect me to explain why I thus take an interest in an affair with which I am totally unconnected; but whether you expect it or not, I deem it necessary to give this explanation, in order that the motive by which I am actuated may be perfectly understood. There is,' he continued, 'in London a person who has obtained among a certain class of speculative men, the *sobriquet* of the Prince; but he is, in my view, the Prince only of ingenious knaves. Of that, however, I'll leave you to form your own judgment. It will be sufficient for me to state, that the greatest swindlers on town are his associates, and what the character of a man is whom they called the Prince, may be readily inferred. Well; this person, this 'Prince,' has got hold of a cousin of mine, an inexperienced young man, who has some expectations; and when I state my conviction that he has got him in his toils expressly in order to plunder him of the property to which he may become entitled, you will at once perceive the cause of my anxiety to check his atrocious career.'

'Oh! I see—I see perfectly. Oh! I perceive.'

'Very well. Now, Sir Richard, you have certain bills out to a considerable amount?'

'I have: I gave them the other day to a person named Mordaunt.'

'That name was assumed. You have of course received no consideration for those bills?'

'Not a shilling.'

'Nor will you ever receive a shilling, Sir Richard. You are the victim of a deeply laid scheme—a foul conspiracy! You have got into the hands of a gang of swindlers who are determined to ruin you if possible, and the leader of this gang is that Prince!'

'Who is he? What's his name?'

'George St. George Julian.'

'Julian!' echoed Sir Richard; 'George St. George Julian!'

'Do you know him?'

'Know him! I'll hang him!'

'Your knowledge of him probably accounts for his malignity and that of his gang, for you are evidently the object of their especial hatred.'

'The villain!' groaned Sir Richard, clenching his fists and grinding his teeth with uncontrollable rage. 'I see it all!—all! I'll torture him! I know where he is to be found! I'll go up this very night! If any thing can enable me to bear up against the accumulated losses I have sustained, it will be the bright prospect of seeing that villain hanging by the neck like a dog! You are *sure*—but I am *sure*—the thing is too plain to admit of a doubt; but I can have *proof*—sufficient *proof* to convict him?'

'You can! But allow me to impress this upon you, that in dealing with him you deal with no common man, and that impetuosity must frustrate our object. His ingenuity perhaps

surpasses that of every other knave in existence. We must therefore, in order to catch him on the hip, proceed with caution; we must be calm; we must take him by surprise. No notice of this communication must appear until all is prepared, when we can *pounce* upon, and tie him to the stake. He has at this moment two of those bills in his possession, each for five hundred pounds at two months.'

'But those are not my bills; I gave no such bills; mine have six, nine, twelve, fifteen, and eighteen months to run!'

'The whole of those bills you accepted in blank, did you not?'

'I did.'

'Then the whole of them have been filled up for five hundred each, at two months!—and they will all fall due on the same day.'

'You amaze me!—But can they recover?'

'Of course they can recover if the bills get into the hands of those who can prove a consideration! Now is the time to strike the blow.'

'And that blow shall be struck!'

'Indict them all!—I know them all; and can give all necessary information!'

'I'll indict him!—he is my man: I care nothing for the rest.'

'But they must all be indicted or you cannot fix him. You were robbed of these bills, and he received them, of course knowing them to have been stolen: you must, therefore, indict at least the receiver and the thief, if not the others.'

'Who is that scoundrel whom I saw?'

'Oh! he's one of the gang—his name is Tynte. Of course he was led on by Julian. He's the prime mover!'

'Of course!—the villain! I'll be in town this night and have the best advice available. I care not what I give for it. I'll trounce him. He shall have no mercy. If by any stratagem—by any straining of the law—I can make it a hanging matter, I will.'

'You may command all the assistance I can render, and as my aid will be the most valuable in the event of my keeping in the back ground—seeing that I can then watch the movements of the enemy without exciting suspicion—I had better not appear in the matter at all.'

'Exactly. I understand. We'll manage it! We'll dine, and then start off at once.'

An order was then given for dinner to be brought up at once, and Sir Richard began to explain how peculiarly hard it was to be pounced upon just at the very time that ruin stared him in the face. Upon this theme of course the virtuous Joseph improved. It was one of his grand points!—his great immediate object was to induce the belief that George, knowing what heavy losses Sir Richard had sustained, had embraced what he conceived to be a fine opportunity for completing his ruin, and as Sir Richard most firmly believed it to be the fact, his immaculate friend was comparatively happy.

Having dined, Sir Richard sent one of his servants to order a post-chaise, and when they had drank a couple of bottles between them, they started for town, inspired with the spirit of



engagement, and perfectly fit for each other's society.

In the meantime George had been applied to by Cavendish, to discount two more of the bills, but as he naturally thought it strange that four bills should be drawn for the same amount and on the same day, he hesitated: still, being anxious to possess them all if all were correct, he told Cavendish—that being Saturday, to call on Monday, when he would let him know whether he could do them or not. Cavendish, conceiving that the delay was proposed merely in order to raise the amount, offered to leave the bills with him till the Monday, which he did; and George having consulted Julia, who was not more surprised than delighted, feeling sure that it would lead to a reconciliation, wrote to Sir Richard by that night's post, to the effect that he had discounted two five-hundred-pound bills—that two others had been offered, which he should be equally happy to discount, in the event of his being assured of the transaction being correct; and that he was then in a position to raise money to any amount on the bills of Sir Richard, which, on receiving his commands, he should at any time feel great pleasure in doing.

Both George and Julia waited for an answer to this letter with the utmost anxiety; but on the Monday morning no answer came. Believing, however, that an answer would arrive on the Tuesday, he put Cavendish off, and in order that he might have the money ready, he, as a mere matter of convenience, got Bull to pay into his banker's the two first bills, that he might have a cheque for the amount when required.

Tuesday came, but with it no answer from Sir Richard: Wednesday's post came in, still no answer was returned; but in the course of that day Bull received a communication from his banker's to the effect that they desired to see him as soon as possible on business of importance. On receiving this communication, Bull, wondering what on earth it could mean, went at once; when they had informed him that they had just been advised that the two bills which he had paid in, and which had been placed to his account as cash, were bills of which with others Sir Richard had been defrauded, and requested to know the name of the person from whom he received them, and the circumstances under which they came into his hands.

Bull, of course, gave the name of George instantly, as the person from whom he received the bills, and by whom they had in fact been endorsed, and at the same time expressed his entire conviction that George was utterly ignorant of the fact of their having been improperly obtained. Into that question the bankers had no wish to enter: all they desired to know was the name of the party that paid them to Bull, with the circumstances under which they were received; and as they were satisfied with the explanation offered, Bull left, and immediately called upon George.

'My dear boy,' said he, as he entered in a state of alarm, 'I have dreadful news, I have; most horrible! Where did you get those bills

from, my dear boy? Where did you get those bills from?'

'Why, what's the matter?'

'We are ruined!—we are utterly ruined!—Who gave them to you?—whom did you do them for?'

'Cavendish: he brought them to me,' replied George; 'is there anything wrong?'

'Everything's wrong! Those bills, my dear boy, have been stolen!'

'Stolen!' exclaimed George, 'by whom?'

'I don't know—I didn't ask—I didn't think of asking. When I heard of it you might have knocked me down with a pen. But those two are not all; many others have been stolen!—a quantity!—a lot!—I don't know how many.'

'I have two more!'

'You have! My dear boy, you alarm me! I'm fit to sink into the earth.'

'I've not done them, nor did I mean to do them until I heard from Sir Richard in reply to my letter.'

'Then you have written to him?'

'I wrote to inform him that I had discounted two; and that I would discount the others with pleasure on receiving his assurance that all was correct.'

'That's a comfort, as far as it goes: but it's a dreadful thing for you, it is, dreadful.'

'It's a bad job as far as money is concerned, for I shall doubtless experience some difficulty in getting it back; but as regards my possession of the bills, I can of course sufficiently prove the transaction to have been on my part perfectly regular and straightforward.'

'I know it!—I know it! I said so, I did.—But what a position it places you in! what a position it places us both in!'

'Don't be alarmed. I had better walk with you to the banker's, and hear more about this unfortunate business.'

'Yes, do; and that will partly exonerate me. We'll go at once, we will. Yes, that will be the best.'

George then left instructions for Cavendish to be detained in the event of his calling during their absence, and they proceeded direct to the banker's in question, and had an interview with one of the firm.

At this interview all was explained, and the account which George gave of the manner in which he had become possessed of the bills appeared to be quite satisfactory to the banker, who gave him the address of Mr. Bounsom, Sir Richard's solicitor in town, upon whom George resolved at once to call.

Conceiving, however, that Cavendish, whom he expected to call for the amount of the bills which he had left, might be waiting, they in the first place went round to the office, and fortunately found Mr. Cavendish there.

'Ah!' he exclaimed, as they entered, 'my two dear friends! Proud to see you both looking so well.'

'Mr. Cavendish,' said George, 'how did those bills of Sir Richard come into your hands?'

'Oh! in the regular way of business.'

'But from whom did you receive them?'

'Why I don't exactly know that I'm at liberty to say; but that, I suppose, is of no importance?'

'Yes, it is of importance,' replied George, earnestly. 'I am anxious to put you on your guard. It is absolutely necessary that you should state his name at once: it is, in fact, essential to your own safety.'

'My safety!—why—what in the name of all thats—what's it all about?'

'Those bills have been stolen.'

'Stolen?—stolen?—is it possible?'

'The information I have just received, places the matter beyond doubt. My possession of them, of course, can be easily accounted for; it rests now with you to explain how they came into your hands.'

'O, I could explain if I were at liberty to do so.'

'At liberty to do so! If the man from whom you received them be respectable, what objection can either he or you possibly have to his name being mentioned?'

'Why, you see I don't like to involve any man.'

'Well: the matter rests with you entirely now!—all I have to state is that I received the bills from you.'

'Will that be necessary?'

'Necessary! Of course it will be necessary. Do you suppose that I would hesitate for a moment under the circumstances to explain the manner in which they came into my hands?'

'Well, I must see about it! The other bills—the two which I left with you—I'd better take back to him, I suppose.'

'No, those I shall keep till the matter is settled, and of course I expect the amount of my check to be returned.'

'But I gave the money to him!'

'Then you must look to him for it. I look only to you.'

'Well, if I get it, why of course it is yours!'

'Whether you get it or not, I must have it.—Let that be distinctly understood.'

'Well!—well!—we must see about the business. But will it come to any thing, thank you?'

'It will be rather a serious affair for those concerned, you may depend upon that. I know Sir Richard too well to doubt for a moment that he will have his full measure of vengeance.—But I'm now going up to his solicitor in order to ascertain how the case stands.'

'Well, but you need not, you know, mention my name more often than occasion requires!'

'I certainly shall not; but if occasion should require me to mention it fifty times, I of course should not hesitate to do so.'

'But now don't you really think, Mr. Cavendish, said Bull, that you had better at once give up the name of this party?'

'It's my policy,' replied Cavendish, 'and I think it a politic policy to get no friend into a scrape if I can help it. I must go and see about it. If the party himself has no objection I'll return and let you know with all the pleasure in nature.'

He then took his leave, and George, accompanied by Bull, went to call upon Bounsom, Sir Richard's attorney.

Mr. Bounsom was within, and as a pleasant-looking man he could not with any truth be described; nor were his manners in the slightest degree enchanting, and therefore neither George nor Bull can be said to have been at all prepossessed in his favor. As they entered the office he scowled at them as viciously as if he intended to wither their nerves, but as George was not a man to be disconcerted by a scowl, he looked and spoke as firmly as if Mr. Bounsom had been one of the most agreeable men alive.

'My name is Julian,' said he.

'I know it!' growled forth Mr. Bounsom with remarkable promptitude and power. 'What do you want here?'

'Why,' replied George, with something bearing the semblance of a sardonic smile, 'I want information respecting certain bills, some of which have unfortunately passed through my hands.'

'Oh! information is it you want? Ah! well: you shall have information. I have instructions to proceed by indictment for conspiracy against you and your gang! Do you require any more information?'

'My gang?' said George, indignantly; 'I don't understand you!'

'Oh! I suppose not. You are a nice young man, I dare say—innocent, doubtless, as a dove.'

'He's a highly-respectable young man, sir, I'll answer for that!' cried Bull, who felt very indignant indeed.

'You know better,' rejoined Bounsom. 'But who are you? one of the gang?'

'What do you mean, sir!' cried Bull, who began to get furious. 'How dare you associate the epithet gang with me? Here's my card, sir! Look at that!'

'Well that may be useful,' said Bounsom.—'You may be wanted with the rest, and when you are, why we shall know where to find you.'

'Let me tell you, sir—'

'Be calm,' said George, 'it is useless to be otherwise than calm.'

'But who can be calm?'

'I can! although accused of being connected with a gang!'

'Yes, it's all very well Mr. George St. George Julian,' said Bounsom, sarcastically; 'but you see, Mr. George St. George Julian, your virtues are known.'

'I am happy to hear it,' said George. 'Your virtues, I presume, are not quite so conspicuous.'

'I tell you what it is, young man,' cried Bounsom, upon whose reputation such a variety of raw places had been established, that he really could scarcely bear to be touched at all. 'If you expect mercy you must assume a very different tone, and I've this to say that if you hope to be mercifully dealt with you'll bring me the whole of those bills by eleven o'clock to-morrow morning. I'll not wait till twelve!—understand that!—on or before eleven o'clock if the whole of the bills, the ten bills be returned, why I may hold out hopes of such mercy as may be consistent with justice; but if they be not forthcoming at that hour—'

'Psha!' exclaimed George. 'Why I hold

you your justice and your mercy alike in contempt. *Mercy!* You must be insane.'

'Then you defy us?'

'Defy you! Of course I defy you! You talk like a madman.'

'Oh! that's enough!—that's quite enough! I don't want to hear another word. Mr George St. George Julian the *Prince*, we shall soon meet again.'

George smiled with contempt as he rose to depart, but Bull would not leave the office until he had explained that he was at least as respectable a man as Mr. Bunsom, and that moreover he was *not* and never had been connected with any *gang*!

'Did you ever hear tell of such insolence?' said he, having got furly out of the office. I never was so insulted before in all my life.'

'It was scarcely worth noticing,' replied George. 'You see what he is. But what did he mean by calling me the *Prince*?'

'Oh I've heard the term applied to you frequently. I believe the application owes its origin to me. I think I called you the prince of speculators soon after that unfortunate quicksilver affair.'

'Well! perhaps I ought to feel honored, but that fellow clearly imagines me to be the prince of swindlers, the leader of a *gang*, and if that should obtain notoriety, why, the *honor* is of a rather equivocal caste.'

'Oh, but he cannot imagine that!'

'It is quite clear to me that that is what he does imagine. However, it cannot be helped. I must be on my guard. It is perfectly obvious that that man means mischief.'

'But what can he do to you? Your case is quite clear!—you had no hand in obtaining these bills!—you knew nothing of the manner in which they were obtained!—they can't do any thing to you, they can't!'

'Yes, they can seriously annoy me. They can fix upon me that appellation, which I may never be able to get rid of. They can charge me with being connected with the parties by whom these bills were obtained; they can include me in the indictment for conspiracy: they can even include you.'

'Include me!—me in an indictment for conspiracy!'

'We are speaking now only of what they *can* do; what they will do remains to be seen. If a man once charged with the commission of crime, no matter how clearly he may be able to establish his innocence, the accusation sticks to him for life.'

'You alarm me, you do!'

'Oh! you are quite safe.'

'And I think that you are!'

'Well! I may be. It certainly is a most unfortunate affair, but we must hope for the best.'

Bull *did* hope for the best, but at the same time he could not help fearing the worst. The bare idea of being included in an indictment set his mind on the rack, and he went home wretched.

George, knowing that Julia would be in agony if she were informed of the circumstance, made

up his mind to conceal it from her at least until the affair had in some way been settled; but on the following morning while at breakfast, Helen's eye rested upon an advertisement in the *Times* as that paper was lying on the table, offering a reward for the apprehension of 'George St. George Julian, *alias* the Prince, Augustus Alexander Cavendish, and Horatio Oswald Tynte, *alias* Robert Mordaunt.'

'What on earth is this!' she exclaimed in tones which started both Julia and George.—'Here's a reward offered for your apprehension, and that of—oh!—pray look!'

George, although he felt of course deeply mortified, smiled as he read it, while Helen and Julia fixed their eyes upon him in a state of almost breathless suspense.

'Well,' said he, throwing the paper down with an expression of contempt, 'that's one way of annoying a man, certainly!'

'What is it, dear!' cried Julia. 'Pray tell me what it is.'

'You may perceive that it has been done but to annoy me. If my apprehension were their object, they would not resort to those means, my dear, you may depend upon that, for I am always to be found. No, they thought that it would vex me to have my name published in connexion with those persons, that's all.'

'Well, if it be nothing more—and yet that is very dreadful, what right have they to do it. I wonder; they ought to be punished! It might do you a very serious injury! Do you know who they are?'

'I can guess pretty nearly. *I'll* see after the gentleman in the course of the day.'

'Such a thing as that is really unpardonable! isn't it, dear?'

Helen, to whom this was addressed, was at the time too much occupied with her own thoughts to notice the fact of her having been appealed to. The name of Tynte had caused the recollection of her marriage, and all the circumstances connected with it to come full upon her, and she sat in silence which, as far as she was concerned, was broken only by an occasional sigh.

Immediately after breakfast, George called upon the attorney with the view of expostulating with him on the subject; but while he was looked upon as a felon, and treated with utter scorn, the only answer he could get was that the Prince was not wanted just then, but that he would be shortly. George of course was highly indignant, and set forth the baseness of such proceedings with great warmth, but finding that he might as well speak to a post, he left, declaring that the matter should not rest there.

While George was with Bunsom, Tynte, whom the advertisement had not escaped, was with his friend, Joseph Broadbridge. He had called to demand an immediate explanation, and as he strongly suspected him of treachery, the terms on which that demand was made were appalling. In vain Joseph declared that he was a stranger to the whole proceeding; in vain he endeavored to assure him that he was ignorant of the manner in which his real name had been

discovered; Tynte would not believe it!—he seized him by the throat, and almost strangled him! nay, as he pinned him to the ground with one knee upon his chest, he threatened to murder him if he still refused to make a full confession.

A full confession, however, Joseph would not make. He still declared that he had never divulged the secret, that he had not even thought of giving up Tynte's name, that he was ignorant of the way in which the information had been obtained, and that his only object was to involve George; and when Tynte at length permitted him to rise, he dwelt upon these points with so much earnestness and tact, that he eventually succeeded in convincing him that George had denounced him in order to save himself.

This caused Tynte's hatred of George to be far more violent than ever, and when Joseph suggested to him that George would be in all probability compelled to pay the amount of the whole of the bills in full in order that proceedings might be stayed, the prospect of a result so ruinous inspired him with ecstasy.

'But,' said he, remembering the danger of his own position, 'what am I to do in the interim? I'm not for a moment safe! where am I to go until this result has been achieved?'

'Remain here,' replied Joseph. 'To prove how much disposed I am to render you all possible assistance, I'll undertake to shield you effectually, and to supply you with all you may require. They'll never, of course, dream of coming here to look for you. It is impossible for you to be in a place of greater safety.'

Tynte—who was of course unconscious of Joseph's only object being to secure him when the proper time arrived—at once accepted this offer, and there he took up his abode, when Joseph embraced the earliest opportunity of informing Sir Richard of the fact, and in the course of the day they went to Bow-street for warrants against both Tynte and George.

The magistrates, however, refused to entertain the charge; when accompanied by their attorney, they proceeded to the Mansion House, and applied to the Lord Mayor, and as this application was equally unsuccessful, Joseph began to feel dreadfully alarmed, while the rage of Sir Richard was unbounded.

The Middlesex Sessions were at hand, and as they saw that the matter must not be delayed, Bounsom was instructed to prepare an indictment, while Joseph undertook to procure sufficient evidence to go before the Grand Jury.—This task was accomplished with the utmost ease; as perjury finds an invulnerable panoply in the Grand Jury-room, there could of course be no difficulty about that. He knew where to pick some 'capital swearers,' and these he secured; and when they had been duly crammed and trained by the respectable Mr. Bounsom, and his equally respectable clerk, nothing more was required to obtain a 'True Bill.'

Secrecy during the whole of these prelimi-

nary proceedings had been held to be essential to success; but to George, notwithstanding, the whole of their movements were known. He was constantly on the alert; he knew that their first great object was to take him by surprise, and when he received information of his having been actually included in an indictment, he saw clearly how it would be.

Accordingly, on the first day of the Sessions he, accompanied by Bull, went to the Court-House, on Clerkenwell Green, to inquire of the Clerk of the Peace whether any 'True Bill' had been found against Julian, Tynte, Cavedish, and others; and as the clerk was not then in a position to inform him, he was requested to call again in an hour. His object in taking this step was to ascertain the fact as early as possible, in order that by going before a magistrate with his sureties at once, he might avoid the inconvenience of remaining in custody forty-eight hours after the notice of bail had been given.—In an hour he therefore returned, and on passing the entrance of the hall he saw Sir Richard, Bounsom, and two other persons in earnest conversation. Sir Richard caught sight of him as he passed, and scowled at him furiously; but George, without appearing to notice him, entered the office with Bull.

They had scarcely, however, been there two minutes, when Sir Richard and an officer entered; and while George was obtaining the information he required, the officer approached, and gently touching him upon the shoulder, said—'you are my prisoner.'

'On what charge?' demanded George.

'Forgery,' coolly replied the officer.

'Forgery!' echoed George, with an expression of the most intense astonishment. 'Forgery!' he was thunderstruck! and turned from the officer to Sir Richard, who met his stare with a fiend-like smile of satisfaction, while Bull seemed utterly paralyzed. 'Forgery!' he reiterated—'Impossible!—Oh! there must be some mistake!'

'No!'—cried Sir Richard, grinding his teeth at him—'No!—there is no mistake!—Forgery is the charge!'

Expostulation was useless: all information was refused: he was hurried off to Bow-street to meet the charge, and there he remained until the magistrates attended in the evening.

The charge of forgery was but a *ruse*. It was preferred merely in order to secure him.—The 'True Bill' had not then been found, but as it was 'found' in the course of the day, they moved the Court for a warrant, and got the amount of bail fixed with eight-and-forty hours' notice. When, therefore, they attended before the magistrates in the evening, they jeeringly refused to go into the charge of forgery—no! that was not their object!—their object in making that charge had been attained!—and George was immediately committed to the new prison, Clerkenwell, until the notice of bail had expired, on the indictment.



[ORIGINAL.]

## THE EVE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW.

BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

Author of 'The Brothers,' 'Cromwell,' &amp;c.

## PART I.

The sun was setting after a lovely day in August, and his rays still gilded the broad mirror of the Seine, and the rich scenery of Paris,—palaces, towers, and domes, with crowded streets and shadowy groves between,—reposing in the mellow light, while the heat, which had been so oppressive during the earlier hours, was now temp red with a soft breeze from the west. Tranquil, however, as that picture showed when viewed from a distance, there was little of tranquillity in aught beyond the view; the bells from an hundred steeples were ringing out their liveliest tones of joy, banners and pennons of many colors flaunted from every pinnacle, while ever and anon the heavy roar of cannon was mingled with the acclamations of the countless multitude. Every window was thronged with joyous faces, every place and thoroughfare swarmed with the collected population of that mighty city—all, as it seemed, partaking of one common happiness, and glowing with mutual benevolence. Here swept along a procession of capuchins in their snowy robes, with pix and chalice, banner and crucifix, censers steaming with perfumes, and manly voices swelling in religious symphony; here some proud count of Romish faith descended from his destrier, and bent his lofty crest to the very dust in adoration of the elevated host—and here some not less noble Huguenot passed on in calm indifference, without exciting wonder (as it would appear) or anger by his inattention to the holiest ceremonial of the church. Minstrels and jongleurs, with rote and viol; professors of the *gai science* in every different tongue, and with almost every instrument, were mingled with peasant girls, in their variegated garbs and wooden shoes—and mercenaries, sheathed in steel. Fair dames and gallant knights of high descent jostled, forgetful of their proud distinctions, with the despised plebeians, whose hearts yet beat as lightly beneath their humble garments, as if they throbbed under robes of ermine and embroideries of gold. At this delicious hour, and contemplating this moving picture, two persons stood, shrouded from public

view by the rich draperies of the window, in a projecting oriel of the royal residence—a youth, whose unmasculine limbs and beardless cheek proclaimed his tender years, although the deep lines graven on his brow by intense thought, or trenched by the fiery ploughshare of unmastered passions, belonged to a maturer age. His cloak and jerkin of Genoa velvet, slashed and faced with satin and fringed with the most costly lace of Flanders, were of the deepest sable, from which flashed forth, in strong relief, his knightly belt and collar of invaluable diamonds. In person, air, and garb, he was one from whom the stranger's eye would turn in aversion, and return again to gaze, as if by some wild fascination upon that sallow countenance and hollow eye, marked as they were by feelings most high and most unholy. Beside him stood a female of superb stature, and a form still as symmetrical as though her eighteenth summer had not yet passed away. There was a fierce and lion-like beauty in her masculine features; but that beauty was defaced and rendered horrible by the dreadful expression which gleamed from her eyes, as though some demon were looking forth from the abode he had usurped within a mortal frame of more than mortal majesty. Her garb was like her son's, (for such was he on whom she leaned) of the deepest mourning, but gathered round her waist by a broad cinchure of brilliants, from which a massive rosary of gold and gems hung nearly to the knee; her long tresses, which, though sprinkled now with many a silvery hair, might once have shamed the raven—were braided closely round her forehead, and partially confined beneath a circlet of the same precious jewels. They were, in truth, a pair pre-eminently stamped by nature's hand, and marked out, as it were, from the remainder of their species, for the performance of some strange destiny, or good or evil. Had Catherine de Medici and her royal son been enveloped in the meanest weeds, stripped of all ensigns of their dignity, and encountered in regions most distant from their empire, they must have instantly been recognized as persons born to exalted eminence above their fellow-mortals, and

singularly qualified by talents, no less powerful than perverted, for the act of government. A single gentleman in royal livery attended in an antechamber on his sovereign's call, while in a gallery beyond, the nodding plumes and gorgeous armor of the Italian mercenaries (who, at that period, were in truth the flower of all continental armies) showed that the privacy of monarchs, if splendid, was but insecure, inasmuch as their power was enthroned upon the fears rather than upon the affections of their subjects. For many moments they gazed in silence on the passing throng; but it was evident, from the working of both their countenances, that their survey had for its object anything rather than the mere gratification of curiosity. At length, as a noble-looking warrior—his venerable locks already blanched to snowy whiteness before his nervous limbs had given a solitary token of decay—rode slowly past, attended by a brilliant train, in confident security, a scornful smile curled the dark features of the boy with even more than wonted malignity. 'The simple fool!' he whispered to his evil counsellor; 'he rides as calmly through the courts of our palace as though he marshalled his accursed heretics within his guarded leaguer!'

'Patience! my son,' returned the fiendlike parent; 'patience yet for a while. A few days more, and the admiral shall cumber the earth no longer! The sword is already whetted for his carcase, and would to heaven that all our foes were tottering on the edge of the same gulf which is prepared for thee, Gaspar de Coligni!'

'I would it were over,' answered Charles; 'there is more of subtlety and warlike skill in that grey head than in an hundred Condés. The day approaches—the day that must dawn upon the brightest triumph of the church: and yet, so long as that man lives, nothing is certain! One doubt in that shrewd mind, and all is lost! He must be dealt upon right shortly. —I would it might be done to-morrow!'

He raised his eyes half doubtingly to the countenance of his mother, and almost started at the illumination of triumphant vengeance which kindled in her withering smile. 'To-morrow he shall perish,' she hissed in the suppressed tones of deadly hatred and unalterable resolution. —'What ho! who waits there?' she continued, as her quick eye caught a glimpse of a passing figure in the crowd: 'To-morrow he dies, and there stands the man who

must perform the deed! *Tete Dieu!* must I call twice?—without, there!' and, in the furious anxiety of the moment, she stamped her heel upon the tessellated floor till the very case-ments shook. Startled by her vehemence, the page drew near on bended knee, and was faltering forth apologies, when, with a voice of thunder, she cut him short. 'Nearer, thou dolt! nearer, I say. Wilt pause till 'tis too late? Look forth here. See'st thou yon tall swordsmen?—him with the velvet bonnet and St. Andrew's cross? Thou dost? After him, with the speed of light; say to him what thou wilt, so thou say'st not I sent thee; but bring him to his majesty's apartment so soon as night shall have fallen. Hence! begone! Cover thy liveries with a simple *roque-luare*, and away! Why dost thou pause? Begone!—nay, hold! If he should doubt, or fear, say to him, as a token, the sword is the most certain spur.'

The man, whose form had thus attracted the notice of Catherine, might well have drawn attention, from his magnificent proportions alone, even had his habit been less at variance than it was with the established fashion of the country. A plain bonnet of dark velvet, with the silver cross of Scotland, and a single eagle's feather drawn forward almost to his eyebrows, a corselet of steel, burnished till it shone as brightly as silver, worn above a dress of chamois leather exquisitely dressed, and fitting with unusual closeness to his limbs, offered a singular contrast, from its plainness and total want of ornament, to the gorgeous garments of the French cavaliers fluttering with fringes, and slashed with a dozen different colors, besides the laces and embroidery of gold and silver, which were, at that period the prevailing order of the day. Still more wildly did the old-fashioned hand-sword of the stranger, with its blade four feet in length, and its two handed gripe, differ from the diamond hilted rapiers of the Parisian gallants;—and most of all did the stern and melancholy air of the noble Scot, for such did his bearing and his dress proclaim him, distinguish him from the joyous, and, at times, frivolous mirth of the gay youths, who crossed his path at every step. Nor did his appearance fail to attract comments, not of the most flattering description, from the French chivalry, who, renowned as they most justly were, for skill in the tilt-yard, and valor in the field, had, even at that distant era, ac-

quired the character of coxcombry and over attention to externals, which is by some supposed to have descended to the present generation. It is probable that it was owing in no slight degree, to the muscular form and determined post of the soldier, that these comments did not assume a more offensive shape; yet, even thus, they had nearly kindled the ire of the formidable individual to whom they bore reference, "*Mon Dieu, qu'il est bausque celin-la* lisped a fair girl to the splendidly dressed cavalier on whom she leaned—" *Il vient apparemment des Montaignes Ecosses,*" returned the gallant after a contemptuous glance, "*avec son epee a la Morte d'Arthur, et son air a faire trembler les souris.*" The blood rushed furiously into the weatherbeaten cheeks of the proud foreigner, and for a second he doubted whether he should not hurl defiance into the teeth of the audacious jester, but with the reflection of a moment, his better sense prevailed. Twirling his mustachios with a grim and scornful smile, he passed on his way, shouldering the press before him, as he muttered—"The painted Popinjays, they neither know the weapons of men, nor the country of cavaliers." It was at this moment, that the emissary of the Queen, who had easily tracked a figure so remarkable, as his of whom he was in quest, overtook, and brushed him somewhat roughly on the elbow as he passed.—"Follow"—he said.—"Follow me if you have the heart of a man." When first he had felt the touch, yet boiling with indignation at the treatment he had experienced, he had half-unsheathed his poinard, but having received, as he imagined, in the words which followed, an invitation to a proper spot for appealing to the sword, he strode onwards, in the wake of his challenger, silent and determined. A few steps brought them to a narrow alley, into which his guide plunged, turning his head to mark whether he was followed as he wished, and, after treading one or two intricate and unfrequented streets, they turned into the Royal Gardens, which, now so famous, even then were decorated with no common skill. "This spot, at length, will suit us," said the Frenchman—"Monsieur is undoubtedly a man of honor? You should have learned my quality"—replied the haughty Scot, "before you dared to offer me an insult. Draw, sir, we are here to fight, and not to parley!

'*Du tout—Beau Sire,*'—returned the other,

not a little annoyed as it would seem, at the unexpected turn which the affair had taken,—'I am the bearer of a message to you—a message, from a lady!—not a cartel?'

'Now out upon thee, for a pitiful pandar'—said the Scot, with increased ire—'dost thou take me for a boy to be cheated with such toys as these? Out with your weapon, before I compel you to it, by the hard word, and the harder blow.'

'May all the saints forefend!'—replied the frightened courtier—'your valor, my fair sir, has flown away with your discretion. I come to you a peaceful bearer to a friendly invitation, and you will speak of naught but swords. A lady of the highest station, would speak with you on matters of high import,—would charge you with a perilous and honorable trust; if you will undertake it, meet me here at ten o'clock to-night, and I will lead you to the rendezvous; if not, I will return to those who sent me, and report the Scottish cavalier as wanting of that high valor of which men speak, when they repeat his name!'

'It is a wild request,'—answered the other, after a short pause. 'How know I, but that you train me to some decoy—I have foes enough to make it like, I trow—what if I bring you a partner?' 'It is impossible,—alone you must undertake the feat, or undertake it not at all. But hold, I have a token for your ear—the sword is the most certain spur,—know you the phrase?'

'As arguing myself known, but whether by a friend, or by a foe, your phrase says nothing.—Nay, be it as it may, I have stood some risks before, and I will bide the blast even now! At ten o'clock I will be at the tryst. I'll then—'

'Adieu'—returned the other, and vanished among the shrubbery, before the Scot could have prevented him, if he had been so minded. But such was not his intention, his mind had been gratified by the singularity, no less than surprised by the boldness, of the request. Naturally brave almost to rashness, banished from his native land from political causes, and without the means of providing for his wants, much less of supporting the appearances demanded by his rank, he eagerly looked forward to any opportunity of raising himself to distinction, perhaps even to affluence, in his adopted country; and, with his thoughts in such a channel as this, it was not probable that a trivial or imaginary danger should deter him from an enterprise, in

which much might be gained, while, on the contrary, nothing could be lost, but that which he had long ceased to value at an extravagant price, an unhappy life. The last stroke of the appointed hour was still ringing in the air when the tall soldier stood alone at the trying place: his dress was in nowise altered, save by the addition of a large cloak of dark materials, worn evidently for concealment, rather than for warmth; but, fearless as he was, he yet had taken the precaution of furnishing his belt with a pair of smaller pistols, then recently introduced. Not long did he remain alone, for scarcely had he reached the spot where his mysterious guide had left him, ere he again joined him from the self same shrubbery wherein he had then disappeared. Without a moment's delay, the messenger led him forward, with a whispered caution to say nothing, whosoever he might see; after a few minutes walking, he reached a portal in a high and richly ornamented wall, and knocked lightly on the door, which was instantly opened by a sentinel, whom, at first sight, the Scotsman knew for one of the chosen guards, who waited round the person of the Sovereign. Sheathed in armor richly inlaid with gold, his harquebus, with its match kindled, on his arm, it would have been impossible to pass the guard without a struggle, which must have alarmed a body of his comrades, who lay wrapped in their mantles on the pavement, or played at games of chance by the pale glimmer of a single lamp: a ring, as it appeared to the silent but watchful Scot, was exhibited, and the mercenary threw his weapon forward in a low salute, and motioned them in silence to proceed. In the deepest gloom they passed through court and corridor; uninterupted by the numerous sentinels whom they encountered, ascended winding staircases; and without meeting a single usher or attendant in apartments of almost oriental splendor, paused at a tapisried door, which opened from the wall of a long gallery so secretly that it must have escaped the eye of the most keen observer. Here again the courtier touched, rather than struck, the pannel thrice at measured intervals, and a female voice, of singular and imperious depth, commanded them to enter. The brilliant glare of light, which filled the small apartment, had well nigh dazzled the bewildered stranger, yet there was enough in the commanding mien of Catharine and the youthful King who sat beside

her, although no royal pomp was there, to tell him he was in the presence of the mightiest the most dreaded sovereigns of Europe; dropping his mantle and his bonnet to the floor, he bent his knee, and, instantly recovering his erect carriage, stood reverent but unabashed. Tempering her stern features with a smile of wonderful sweetness, and assuming an air of easy condescension which not her niece—the lovely Mary of Scotland,—could have worn with more becoming grace, the Queen addressed him.—‘We have summoned to our presence, if we err not, one of the truest and most faithful servants of our beloved niece of Scotland. Although the Queen of France has not yet recognized the person, believe not sir, that Catharine de Medicis is unacquainted with the merits of the Sieur Hamilton.’

Another inclination, and the color, which mounted to his very brow at this most flattering, though private testimony, testified his respect and gratitude; yet as the speech of Catharine needed no reply, though invariably marvelling to what all this might tend, the knight of Bothwell haugh,—for he it was who stood in that high presence,—saw no cause for breaking silence.

‘Speak, Sir,’—pursued the queen,—‘have we been misinformed, or do we see before us the most unswerving, and the latest follower of the injured Mary?’

‘So please your Grace’—was Hamilton’s reply—‘so long as sword was drawn, or charger spurred, in my unhappy mistress’ cause, so long was I in the field!—but how I can lay claim to praise as being the last or truest of her followers I know not. Hundreds fell at the red field of Langside, as brave, and better warriors than I; scores have since sealed their faith in blood upon the scaffold; and thousands of true hearts yet beat in Scotland; more faithful never thrilled to the trumpets sound—thousands that followed her, and fought for her; that watched, and fasted, and bled for her.’

But that failed to *Avenge Her*—interrupted Catharine, and for years afterwards did those words ring in the soldier’s ears with unforgotten fearfulness, for never had he deemed such fiendish sounds of exultation could proceed from human lips, much less from woman’s. ‘Art thou not the slayer of the base born slave, that was the master-spirit of her enemies?—Art not thou he, whose name shall go down to posterity with those of David, and of Joel, and



of Judith, and of all those who have smitten the persecutors of the church of God?—Art thou not he—whom princes shall delight to honor, whom the holy Father of our faith himself has pronounced blessed?—Art not thou the avenger of Mary—the killer of the heretic Murray?

Soh! sits the wind there—thought the astonished Hamilton, as he coolly replied,—‘He was the enemy of my royal, my most unhappy mistress, and for that I warred with him a *l’outrance*. The persecutor of the faithful, and for that I cursed him! The murderer of my wife, and for that, *for that alone*, ‘I slew him.’

‘Well didst thou do, and faithfully!’ cried the Queen—‘adherents such as thee it is the pleasure, no less than the pride of the house of Guise to honor and reward.’

‘Sieur of Hamilton,’—continued Charles, apt pupil of his demoniacal guardian—‘Earthly honors are but vain rewards to men like thee!—Yet wear this sword as a token of gratitude due from the King of France to the avenger of his cousin; if thou art inclined to wield it in the cause of him who offers it, I hold a blank commission to a high office in our army—the command of our guards! Shall I insert the name of ‘Hamilton?’

‘Honors like these, your majesty’—he was commencing, when he was again cut short by the Queen.

‘Are insufficient, we are well aware, when weighed against thy merits—accept them, notwithstanding as an earnest of greater gifts to come. Serve but the heads of the house of Guise, as thou hast served its scions, and the truncheon of the *maréchal* hereafter may be thine. No thanks, Sir! Actions are the only thanks that we require!—and now farewell!—we will speak further—with our officer to-morrow.’

Accustomed, long before, to the etiquette of courts, Hamilton received the gift upon his knees, kissed the bright blade, and with a profound inclination, retreated without turning to the door—bowed a second time even lower than before, and left their presence!—Scarcely, however, had he made three steps, ere he was recalled by the voice of Catharine herself. Ha! now shall I know the price, which I must pay for this rich gewgaw—methought such gilded baits must point to future services, rather than to past good offices,—the half formed words died on his lip as the vivid thought flashed through his brain, yet not a sound was heard;

he stood in calm attention, listening to the words of the tempter.

‘We have bethought us, sir,’ said Catharine, in a low stern whisper, ‘we have bethought us of a service, of most high importance, wherewith it is our will that thou shouldst commence thy duties, and that too with the dawn! It has something of danger; but we know to whom we speak!—much of honor, and therefore we rejoice in offering it to thee!—If successful, to-morrow’s eve shall see our champion *Maréchal de France*. Dost thou accept the trust?’

‘Danger, so please your highness,’ replied the wary soldier, ‘danger is the very soul of honor, and for honor alone I live. What are the commands of your Majesty?’

Confident that her offer was understood and accepted, the same hateful gleam of triumph flashed across her withered features as before, and the same note of exaltation marked her words. ‘Thou knowest, doubtless, Gaspar de Coligni; the admiral; the heretic; the sword and buckler of the accursed Huguenots?’

‘As a brave soldier, and a consummate leader, I do know the man. Pity but he were faithful, as he is trusty and experienced! What is your grace’s will concerning this De Coligni?’

‘*Qu’il Meurt!*’

‘Give me the means to bring the matter to an issue, and I will do my *devoir*. But how may I find cause of quarrel with one so high as Coligni? Bring me to the admiral, and let him take every advantage of place and arms, I pledge your majesty my word, to-morrow night shall not find him among the living.’

‘And think’st thou’—she replied, with a bitter laugh, ‘think’st thou we reck so little of a faithful servant’s safety, as expose him to a desperate conflict with a warrior such as him, concerning whom we speak. As Murray fell, so fall De Coligni!’

‘Not by the hand of Hamilton,’ was the calm but resolute answer. ‘My life your majesty may command even as your own—I reck not of it!—but mine honor is in my own keeping.—Mine own private quarrel have I avenged, as best I might; but neither am I a mercenary stabber to slay men in the dark, who have done me no wrong; nor is a Scottish gentleman wont to take gold for blood shedding. I fear me I have misunderstood the terms on which I am to serve your grace—most gladly, and most grate-

fully, did I receive these tokens of your majesty's approbation, as honors conferred for honorable service in the field. If, however, they were given either as a price for the blood of Murray, or as wages to be redeemed by future murder, humbly, but at the same time firmly, do I decline your bounty.'

'Why thou most scrupulous of cut throats!' exclaimed the youthful king, whose iron heart was utterly immovable by any touch of merciful or honorable feeling. 'Dost thou, *thou* who didst mark the man long months before the deed, didst dog him to destruction as your own northern hound hangs on the master stag, didst butcher him at an unmanly vantage, dost thou pretend to round high periods about honor?—Honor in a common stabber! ha, ha, ha!' and he laughed derisively at his own false and disgraceful speech.

'It is because I am no common stabber!' returned the noble Scott, 'that I refuse your wages, as I loathe the office, and despise the character, which you would fix upon a gentleman of ancient family, and unblemished reputation! My lord—I slew your base-born tyrant, even as I would slay your highness, should you give me cause. Had he been my inferior, a short shift, and a snorter cord, had paid the debt I owed him! mine equal, the good sword, that never failed its master, had avenged her to whom alone that master's faith was plighted!—He was, so word it if you will, my superior!—Superior not in arms, or strength, or virtue,—not in the greatness of nature's giving,—but in craft, and policy, and all the pompous baubles that make fools tremble; one path was open to my vengeance—and one only! I took it—I would have taken the arch-fiend himself to be my counsellor, so he had promised vengeance! Show me the man that dares injure Hamilton, and Hamilton will slay him!—Honorably if it may be, and openly,—but, in all cases,—*Slay him*. For this matter, sire, I have no license from my country to commit murders here in France: mine own just quarrel! I have avenged as best I might, but not for price, or prayer, will I avenge the guard of another,—be that other prince or peasant!—Farewell, your highness, and when you next would buy men's blood, deal not with Scottish nobles,—your grace has Spaniards and Italians enough round your person, who will do your bidding without imposing tasks on Scottish men, which it befits not them to execute, nor you to order! Has

your grace any services to ask of Hamilton, which he may perform with an unsullied hand, your word shall be his law Till then,—Farewell!'

He laid the jewelled sword, and the broad parchment, on the board, and with another inclination of respect slowly and steadily retreated!

'Bethink thee, Sir,'—cried the fierce Queen, goaded almost to madness by the disappointment, and by the taunts of the indignant warrior, not the less galling that they were veiled beneath the thin garb of respect, 'bethink thee! it is perilous, even to a proverb, to be the repository of royal secrets! how know we but thou mayest sell thine information to De Coligni?'

'In that I would not sell *his* blood to thee!' was the stern answer. 'If peril be incurred—'twill not be the first time peril and I have been acquainted—nor yet, I deem the last!' Without another syllable he strode from the presence chamber, with a louder step, and firmer port, than oft was heard or seen in those accursed halls. The usher, who had introduced him, deeming his sovereign's will completely led him forth as he had entered, in silence, and ere the guilty pair had roused themselves from their astonishment, Hamilton was beyond the precincts of the Palace. An hour had scarcely passed before the messenger was again summoned to wait the monarch's bidding. 'De Crespigny,' he said, 'take three of the best blades of our Italian guard, dog that audacious Scot, and, be he at the boards, in the bed; at the hearth or in the sanctuary——' he paused, tapped the hilt of his poinard with a smile of gloomy meaning, and waved his hand towards the door,—'let his head be at my feet before to-morrow's dawn, or look well to thine own!—Away!'

## PART II.

The morning of that fatal day had arrived, the horror and atrocity of which may never be forgotten or forgiven, until the records of humanity itself shall pass away. That day, which, intended as it was by the infernal policy of France to strike a deathblow to the reformed religion throughout the world, did more to unite, to strengthen, and finally to establish the ascendancy of that religion, than could have been effected by the arms of its champions, or the arguments of its professors, in centuries of unopposed prosperity; as though the fiend who suggested the counsel, had deserted his pupils in very

derision of their blind iniquity. Nor in truth was the hallucination of the confiding Huguenots less unaccountable than the unearthly wickedness of their opponents. It would seem that their eyes had been so completely sealed up, and their suspicions so obliterated by the marriage of the youthful monarch of Navarre with the sister of the faithless Charles, that no proof, however flagrant, of the meditated treason could awake them from their slumbers. Nor, when De Coligni was well nigh assassinated by the aim of an enemy, less scrupulous than the knight of Bothwellhaugh, could they be aroused, either by the crime itself, or by the eloquence which it called forth from the *Vidance of Chartres*, to see in this attempt 'the first act of hideous tragedy.' Never were the extraordinary talents of the queen mother more evident, or more successful, than in the series of intrigues, by which the protestant leaders were amused, until the scheme for their destruction was matured; and it is most remarkable that the very measures, by which she lulled their fears to rest, were those which laid them most completely at the mercy of their persecutors. It was recommended by Charles that the principal gentlemen of the party should take up their quarters around the lodging of the wounded admiral, avowedly that they might be ever at hand to protect him from the machinations of his foes, but in truth being thus collected into one body, they might be butchered at ease without a hope of resistance, or a possibility of escape. A guard of honor was appointed from the musqueteers of the royal household to watch over the safety of De Coligni, but this very guard was under the command of Cossicus, his most deadly enemy; and lastly with unparalleled baseness Charles and his fiendish mother actually paid a visit of condolence at the bed-side of the man, whom they had doomed to a miserable and disgraceful end.—All was at length prepared; the Duke of Guise selected, as the chief most fitted for the conduct of the massacre; the captains of the Swiss companies and the Italian *Condottieri* were harrangued and loaded with reward; the *dizimers* of the burgher guards were privately instructed to arm their men in all the quarters of the city, to assume, as distinctive ensigns, a white cross in their hats, and white scarfs on their arms, to kindle flambeaus in every window, and when the palace clock should sound, as it was wont to do at day-break,—to fall on and leave no Hugue-

not alive within the walls of Paris. Nor was this all; in every town throughout the realm, like orders had been dispatched by certain hands to all the Catholic governors, so that the striking of that bell in the metropolis, should be repeated from every town in France at the same hour, a signal for simultaneous massacre, a knell for thousands and tens of thousands of her bravest and her best. One circumstance, however, had occurred, which in no slight degree embarrassed the proceedings of the royal executioners, and it needed all the influence of Catharine to hold her weaker, yet no less wicked son firm to his resolution.

The whole day succeeding to their interview with Hamilton, had been spent by that bad pair in expectation amounting almost to an agony. In obedience to the mandate of his master, De Crespigny had departed, with three ruffians of his guard, to seal the tongue of Bothwellhaugh forever. The gates of Paris had been closed, and the escape of the victim seemed impossible, nor could it be imagined for a moment that one unsupported foreigner could successfully resist the arms of four assailants selected for their skill, no less than their ferocity. Still hour after hour crept along, and no tidings arrived of the success or failure of the enterprise, till on the very morning of the intended massacre, the stiff and mangled corpses of all the four were discovered among the shrubbery of the royal gardens, bearing fearful marks on head and trunk, of the tremendous weapon, which had laid them low. That they had perished by the hand of Hamilton was evident, but to the means by which one man had defeated and slain four antagonists, each at the least his equal in strength, no clue could be discovered; nor could the most diligent enquiries throw any light upon the subsequent movements, or the present residence of the victor. Indeed, from the moment of his dismissal from the king's apartment, no one appeared to have seen or heard aught of an individual far too remarkable both in personal appearance and in dress to have passed unnoticed amidst the idlers of the metropolis. It was nevertheless certain from the demeanor of De Coligny, and of his unsuspecting friends, that, hitherto at least, no discovery of their meditated destruction had occurred; and although probable that the indignant Scot, on finding himself singled out for death by his frus-

trated employers, should have revealed the whole conspiracy, it was yet possible that the same high-minded though mistaken spirit, which had urged him to avenge himself on his own personal oppressor, while neither fear nor favor could induce him to play the hireling stabber's part, might now prevail on him to conceal that villainy, however he might abhor and shrink from its fulfilment, which had been imparted to him beneath the seal of private confidence.

The night drew nigh, and with the darkness of the heavens a heavier gloom fell on the spirit of the king; an eager, fretful restlessness took place of his wonted dignity; his eyes glared from their hollow sockets with a wild expression of misery, and the changing flush which now crimsoned his features, now left them as sallow as the lineaments of a corpse, gave awful tokens of a perturbed soul. Not an instant did he remain at rest, one moment flinging himself violently on a seat, then striding with unequal and agitated steps across the floor, like the chafed hyena in his den. Now swearing the annihilation of the *Huguenots* with fearful blasphemies,—now accusing his advisers, and even his dreaded mother herself, of impious superstition and remorseless frenzy. 'It is ye,' he said 'who have driven me to this abyss of guilt! It is ye who reap the profits of the sin! but it is I, miserable I! that shall be blasted through endless ages by the hatred of men, and perhaps by the wrath of God,'—and he sunk in an agony of tears upon his couch, which rocked beneath the violence of his convulsive anguish.

'Go to!' cried Catherine with undissembled rage—'go to! thou coward boy, think not to me of conscience and condemnation! Thinkest thou to hide from me who have watched it from your earliest years, the secrets of that craven heart. 'Tis not the wrath of God—'tis not the hatred of posterity that thou dost fear. Say rather that thou dost tremble at the despair of thine enemies, that thou dost shrink in terror—base terror! from one weak, aged, wounded mortal: out, out upon thee, for a miserable dastard! Nay, rather out upon myself, that I have born a coward to the name of Medicis.'

'Darest thou,'—shouted the boy, springing from his seat, and confronting her with equal fury, 'Darest thou say this to me?'

'All men will dare do so,' she answered scornfully, 'All men! *tete Dieu*, all women will dare

to call thee coward! will pray to the saints in their extremity, that they may give birth to idiots, monsters, anything, but such as thee!'

'Mother,' he said, gnashing his teeth with rage, and playing with his poniard's hilt—'Peace peace! or by Him who made me, you shall rue this hour! Tremble!'

'Lache! Poltron! Wouldst thou bare thy weapon on a woman,—one who fears it less than thee! which for thy life thou durst not handle in the presence of De Coligni. Tremble! think'st thou I *could* tremble, if I would; thinkest thou that I the destined champion of the Faith—that I, the Savior of the Holy Church,—I, that was preordained, before mine eyes beheld the day, to quench the night of heresy in blood,—that I who, if thou darest to hesitate, will take the guidance of this matter on myself, and win that glory here, that immortality hereafter, the brilliancy of which is more resplendent than thy dazzled eyes can bear to look upon, thy vacillating mind to comprehend,—that I know how to tremble? Her vehemence prevailed! the current of his thoughts was directed into another channel, and it was with no small difficulty that she prevailed on him to await the result of an execution in the galleries of the Louvre, rather than to sheathe himself in steel, and sally forth at the head of the murderers, to prove his valor, and to glut his newly awakened thirst for blood! Yet though she had thus confidently spoken of the glory and the undoubted success of the conspiracy, in her own secret soul she shuddered! not with fear, not with remorse, but with devouring care, with all-engrossing agitation. Every trivial sound that echoed through the royal corridors, every distant peal of voices from the street, even the stealthy footstep of the attendant courtiers, or the sudden shutting of a door, struck on her guilty ear with a power hardly exceeded by that of the most appalling thunder. The glittering board was spread, the choicest viands served in vessels of gold, the richest vintages of Auxerre and Champagne, flowers, and fruits, and perfumes, all that could tempt the eye, or minister to the gratification of the senses, were set before the royal conclave. The goblets were filled, and drained, the jost passed round, and smiles, human smiles, illuminated the features of those who were plotting deeds worthy the arch-heretic himself. The boy-king, and his brother, half-maddened by the excite-



ment of suspense, the delirium of meditated guilt, and the fiercer stimulus of wine, could scarce refrain from bursting into open fury; while their craftier parent, even as she yielded to the intoxication of the moment, never for an instant forgot the dreadful responsibility which claimed the fullest exercise of her keen energies; and, although she lent herself entirely to the accomplishment of her present object,—the winding up of her son's vacillating courage to its utmost pitch—she had yet an ear for every remote murmur, an eye for every varying expression that might flit across the brow of page, or chamberlain, an almost superhuman readiness of mind, that would have defied the most critical emergency to find it unprovided with some apt expedient. Stroke after stroke the heavy bells rang midnight, and it seemed to each of those excited minds, as though an age elapsed between each fast repeated clang. Another hour had yet its course to run, before those *matins*, whose name shall never be spoken without abhorrence, while the world endures, should sound the condemnation of a people. Another hour had yet to creep or to career above their heads, before ten thousand sleepers should be awakened—*never to sleep again!* The flowers had lost their fragrance—the wine palled on their deadened palates—the lights reflected by a hundred plates of crystal, seemed but to render darkness visible. Yet who could calmly sit and count the minutes that were to marshal in that morning of indiscriminate slaughter, who could endure to listen to the monotonous ticking of that clock, the earliest chimes of which were to be answered by the groans of myriads? 'Come,' at length exclaimed the callous mother,—'we are growing weary. It will be better in the tennis court than here. Thence we can mark the progress of the execution!'—and rising from her seat she led the way, her features dressed in smiles, and her eyes beaming with exultation to the hall of exercise. Few moments had elapsed before the clatter of the rackets, the lively bounding of the balls, and the loud voices of the antagonists announced that heart and spirit were engrossed in the excitement of the game. Oaths, shouts of laughter, proffered bets, and notes of sportive triumph rang from the tongues, that, scarce an hour ago, had decided on the doom of the unsuspecting innocents, and that, before another should arrive, would lend their tones to swell the fearful cry of 'Kill! kill!—Death to the Huguenots—

kill and spare not!' The noble gallery, which had been fitted, according to the fashion of the day, for the tennis court, overlooked with its tall netted casements, the principal street of Paris, even at that early age a wide and beautiful promenade. The cool breeze from the river swept refreshingly around their feverish brows, but wafted not a sound to their ears; although they well knew, that the guards must be already at their posts, crouching like tigers, that their spring might be unerringly destructive. 'Tranquil, however, as it appeared, the city glowed with almost noonday light, for every window was illuminated with row above row of flashing torches, and, at every angle of the streets, huge lanterns swayed to and fro in the fresh currents of the night wind. It was a beautiful scene, but at the same time one whose beauty was of a painful and unnatural cast; every joint and mouldering of the walls, nay every crevice of the pavements, was defined as clearly as the outlines of a Flemish picture; yet it seemed as if this unaccustomed splendor had been produced by some enchantment, and to meet no mortal end; for not a human being was to be seen throughout the whole perspective, not a houseless dog intruded on this strange solitude. At an earlier period of the night all had been dark and gloomy, even before the hour of traffic, or of pleasure, had entirely subsided; but now when every place was silent and deserted, unseen hands had steeped the vast metropolis in lustre, to be witnessed by no admiring multitudes. Long and wistfully did Catharine gaze upon that spectacle, straining her senses, sharpened as they were by the most fearful expectation, to catch whatever indication, sight or sound might offer of the success of the conspiracy. At length, as she listened, Charles—whose care-worn eye wandered ever and anon from his deep gaming to his mother's countenance—saw by the momentary shudder that thrilled her stately form, and by the rigid tension of her features, that the moment was at hand—and so in truth it was! Even when the tremor quivered through her limbs, the hammer hung suspended above the tocsin bell. She had beheld no vision—she had heard no murmur to announce the hour—yet she knew—she felt—that, as the breath she was then inhaling, should go forth, the *matin* peal would sound. And it did sound! Heavily did the first clang of St. Germain's a' l'Auxerre strike on their bursting hearts, but ere its ring-

ing cadences had died away, another, and another, and another, took up the signal; till at every pause between their deafening clamor, the chimes of a hundred tocsins might be heard losing themselves in undistinguished distance!—A single shot broke through the din of bells with its sharp report, a straggling volley followed—a long, clear, female shriek—and then the brutal riot of savage soldiery, the shivering clash of steel, groans, prayers, and execrations, were blent in one terrific roar!—If ever earthly scene might be assimilated justly to the abode of condemned sinners, and tormenting fiends, Paris was such, on that infernal morning. No! it is not profanity to say or to believe that disembodied demons exulted in their prison-houses if they were not permitted to revel in the actual contemplation of Christian men converted into worse than pagan persecutors—of the brightest city of Christendom presenting the appalling aspect of an universal hell.

‘It is done,’ cried Catharine, clapping her hands in furious triumph, ‘The Lord hath risen and his enemies are scattered!’

‘I am at length a King!’—exclaimed the boy, whose fears were swallowed up in ecstasy at the accomplishment of all his machinations.

Brave Guise! Noble Coscius! Happy the monarch who can trust to servants, such as ye!

Before the words had passed his lips, a louder, and a nearer burst of mingled cries shewed that the tide of carnage set towards the palace. Hurling his racket to the further end of the long hall, he sprang to his mother’s side, and as he viewed the massacre of his confiding subjects, tossed his arms aloft with an expression of eye and lip that might have well be seemed a Nero! First a few scattered wretches rushed singly, or in groups, along the lighted streets; mothers and maids,—stern men with dauntless hearts, and scar-seamed brows,—old grandsires with their feeble limbs, and locks of snow,—and infants tottering along in hapless tremor!—Then with a sound like that of the spring-tide, the thoroughfare was choked up by thousands, frantic with despair, hurrying, they knew not whither, like sheep before their slaughterers.

Behind them flashed the bloody sword of Guise and his relentless satellites; before, the gates were closed; above, around, on every side, from every roof, and every window of the illuminated dwellings, the volleyed shot hurried them in masses to destruction.

‘Quick! quick! my harquebuss!’ yelled the impatient Charles, maddened by the sight of blood, and thirsting like the fleshed wolf for his share. ‘Kill, kill!’ he shouted in yet loftier tones, as the unsparing Duke dashed forward, crimsoned from spur to plume with Christian blood, animating the fanatic Italians of the guard, and aiding the work of slaughter, with his own polluted weapon. ‘Kill! kill!—Gallant De Guise. Kill! and let none escape!’

Before the windows of the Louvre was a narrow court, fenced from the street by a tall palisade of iron work; hither, in the first impulse of their terrors, had a herd of wretches fled, as it were to sanctuary in the immediate presence of their King; and here were they confined between the massive portals of the palace, and the noble thoroughfare now crowded even to suffocation by an unresisting multitude, through which the sword was slowly but implacably hewing itself a passage. Protected by the fretted railings from their foes without, they had vainly flattered themselves that they were secure from immediate violence, and trusted to the proverb, which has but too frequently been found fallacious, “That a King’s face, gives grace!” What then must have been their agony when they beheld that very countenance to which they looked for mercy, glaring along the levelled matchlock, and felt their miserable bodies pierced by the shot at each discharge, and by the hand of their legitimate protector.

On that tremendous night, Hamilton, like a thousand others, was startled from sleep, in his secluded lodging, by the war of musketry, and by the howls of the infuriate murderers; but, unlike the rest, he recognized at once the sequel of that relentless policy, to which he had himself refused to minister. During the very night, on which he had been admitted to the royal presence, on his return homewards through the gardens of the Louvre, he had been assailed by the assassins, whom from their garb and arms he at once distinguished as the agents of the King; by a pretended flight he had succeeded in avoiding their united force, and singly overpowering each, had escaped uninjured to his dwelling. Conscious that he was singled out by a power, which it would be no easy matter to elude, and deeming that some political convulsion was at hand, he had kept himself in total retirement, till the hue and cry should have blown over, and till some opportunity

might offer for his effecting a retreat from France. Springing from his couch at first sounds of the massacre, he perceived at a glance that all the neighboring casements were lighted up as if for some high festival, nor could he for a moment doubt but that to be discovered unprepared would be a signal for his instant death. Few moments sufficed to kindle such a blaze as would vouch for his privacy to whatever plot might be on foot, to prepare his weapon for the crisis, and to arm himself from head to heel.— Ere long the tumult thickened, the same tragedy was enacted before his humble doors, that was polluting even then the threshold of the royal residence. A few shots from his window, harmlessly aimed above the heads of the poor fugitives, procured him at once the character of a zealous partizan; when, binding the badge of white upon his arm,—which he had remarked with his accustomed keenness,—and fixing in his burnished morion the silver cross of his loved country, he descended, resolutely, plunging through the abhorred carnage, in the hope of extricating himself, amidst the general havoc, from the guilty city.

Though by no means elevated in all his thoughts above the prejudices of the age, and though himself a zealous adherent of the Romish Church, his noble soul revolted from a scene so barbarous, and, as he saw at once, so horribly gratuitous. Had the destruction been confined to the leaders of the Huguenot party, nay, even to the whole of its armed supporters, it is possible that his ideas might not have soared beyond the spirit of the times; but when he saw children unable yet to lisp their earliest words, girls in the flush of virgin loveliness, and youthful mothers, with their infants at their bosoms, hewn down and trampled to the earth, he shrank with inward loathing from such promiscuous slaughter, and hardly could he refrain from starting to the rescue. Nurtured, however, as he had been, in a rude and iron country, educated in a school of warfare, inured, from his youth upward, to sights of blood, and, above all things, tutored by sad experience, in that most arduous lesson, to keep the feelings ever in subjection to the reason, he had less difficulty in resisting his desire to strike a blow in behalf of helpless innocence, than we at this enlightened period, can imagine; and thus, occasionally lending his deep voice to swell the clamor which he hated, he strode along amidst the host of persecutors, col-

lecting as best he might, from the disjointed exclamations of the mob, such information as might serve to extricate him from the wide chancel house of Paris. Armed, from head to heel, in complete panoply, his unusual proportions and lofty port, joined to the stern authority which sat upon his brow, caused him to be regarded in the light of a chieftain among the Romish Partizans. It was therefore not long before he ascertained that two of the city gates had purposely been left unbarred, though circled by a chosen band of Switzers, and Italian mercenaries; and if he could succeed in making his way unscathed to either of these, he doubted not but he should be able to pass, by means of his assumed importance; and, once at large, he was resolved to make no pause, until he should have crossed the sea. One difficulty alone presented itself,—it would be necessary that he should traverse the esplanade before the windows of the Louvre,—and beneath the very eyes of the perfidious Charles, who, if he should recognise the person of the haughty Scot, would, beyond a doubt, avenge the slight which had been offered to his Royal will. Still it was his sole chance of escape; and, when life is at stake, there is no probability, however slender, to which men will not cling in their extremity.

Boldly but at the same time cautiously, did Hamilton proceed, stifling his indignation at a thousand sights, which made his heart's blood curdle, with necessary resolution not daring to extend an arm to protect the miserable beings who clung around his knees, wrestling with their cold-blooded murderers, and shrieking, in their great agony, for 'Life! Life, for the love of God!' Once, as if with ill-dissembled fury, he headed a band of more than common ferocity, a lovely female,—her slender garments torn from her limbs, by the rude soldiery,—her long, fair tresses dabbled in the blood which gushed from twenty wounds,—thrust the helpless babe into his arms, beseeching him with anguish, such as none but mothers feel,—'If he had ever loved a woman, to save her little one.'—Even as she spoke, a dark-browed Spaniard struck his stiletto into her bosom and she fell, still shrieking as she lay beneath the trampling feet—'*Sauvez—pour l'amour de Dieu, sauvez mon misérable petit.*' The monster who had felled the parent, drove the bloody weapon into the throat of the infant, and whirling the little corpse

around his head, shouted the accursed war-cry 'Death! death! to the Huguenots!' It was fortunate for the noble Scot, that as he turned, the hot blood boiling to his brow with rage, to avenge the crime, an ill-directed shot from a neighboring casement, took place in the Spaniard's forehead, and, with a mingled yell of agony and triumph, he plunged headlong forward upon the bodies of his victims, a dead man, ere he touched the pavement. His whole soul sickening at the fiendish outrage, Hamilton could barely nerve himself to go another step, in such companionship; but, although he did not move a limb, the pressure of the concourse bore him onward, till almost unconsciously he found himself a witness to the scenes, enacted in the courtyard of the Palace. The area of the promenade had, by this time, been cleared of living occupants through means too surely indicated by the piles of gory carcasses heaped up on every side. The men, tired of unresisted butchery, leaned listlessly on their tall lances, unless some keener stimulus urged them to fresh exertions; they had become epicures, as it were, in cruelty, and rarely moved from their positions, unless to commit some deed of blacker and more damnable atrocity. The King still kept his station at the window of the tennis court, and ever and anon, the bright flash of his harquebuss announced that he still found gratification in wanton bloodshed. The unfortunate wretches who had rushed into the toils, while seeking for a refuge, had, for the most part, fallen victims to his deadly aim; but a few, smarting with unnumbered wounds, and rendered sullen by despair; crouched in a corner of the small enclosure, seemingly unwilling to meet their fate, otherwise than in company; till pricked and goaded up by the pike of the *condottini*, they were compelled to run the gauntlets, foaming like over-driven oxen, and staggering like men in the last stage of drunkenness. The red spot glowed upon the front of Bothwellhaugh, as he beheld this savage pastime, for many hours his choler had been accumulating, and it was now fast verging to the point, at which it must find vent, or suffocate him. He saw a fair child borne in the arms of a brawny butcher of the *fauxbourg*, smiling up into the face and twining its tiny fingers amongst the clotted moustaches of its unmoved tormentor;---he saw it torn from its hold, impaled upon a lance, and held aloft, a target for a

'monarch's practice. He saw de Guise, the arch-mover of the mischief descend from his *destrier*, and coolly wipe the visage of the slaughtered Coligini, with his own kerchief, to ascertain the identity of the lifeless clay. He saw a band of little children, dragging an infant Huguenot along, laughing and crowing at its youthful executioners, to plunge the cradled babe in the dark eddies of the Seine. He felt that he could endure this no longer,---he felt that he must proclaim his hatred and abhorrence, or expire in the effort of repressing them; and all that he now desired, was an opportunity of dying with eclat, and involving in his own destruction the author of so many honors. At the very moment when these fiery thoughts were working in his brain, an object met his eye, which by recalling associations of a time and place far distant, roused him at once to open fury.

A mother bearing a lifeless child along, hopelessly and irretrievably frantic! Regardless of the wounds which had been inflicted on her tender frame, fearless of the pursuers, who hunted her with brandished blades, she dandled the clay-cold body in the air, or hushed it in her bleeding bosom, humming wild fragments, which her memory yet retained, from melodies of happier days. At once the snow-storm on the banks of the Eske, his own beloved bride, frenzied and perishing beside the first-born pledge of her affections, rushed instantaneously upon his mind. 'Accursed butchers, hold,' he shouted in a voice of thunder, and, ere they could obey his bidding, the foremost fell, precipitated by the swiftness of his previous motion, ten feet in front of his intended victim; a second, and a third staggered away from his tremendous blows, mortally wounded, while the rest, struck with astonishment at seeing one, whom they, till now, had followed as a champion in their cause, stand forth in the defence of a proscribed heretic, faltered and skulked aside like sated hounds. Ere he had time to reflect on the consequences of his rashness, a well-remembered voice thrilled in his ear, '*C'est lui.*' No more was spoken; but in that brief sentence, he had heard and recognized his doom. Turning towards the palace front, he marked the form of Catharine, leaning from the window; and pointing, in all the eagerness of hatred, her extended arm to his own person; behind her, he could just distinguish the sallow featurer of the king reaching his hand to grasp



the matchlock which a courtier loaded at his elbow, 'I shall die,' muttered the undaunted Scot, 'but unavenged never.' A petronel was in his hand, the muzzle bore fully on the majestic figure of the queen, his finger pressed the trigger; he paused; stood like a statue carved in marble, his weapon still directed to the mark, and that falcon glance, which never yet had missed its aim, fixed steadfastly upon its object! He saw the carbine of the tyrant rise slowly to its level, yet he fired not! The person of Charles was screened by the intervention of his mother's breast. 'Devil!' he shouted,

'Devil that thou art; exult in thine impunity! No Hamilton hath ever harmed a woman! The carbine was discharged, but no motion of the Scot showed what had been the event, The brow was still serene, the arm extended! and the eyeball calm as ever. The hand rose higher, till the pistol pointed perpendicularly upwards; the report rang clearly into the air; and as the echoes passed away, the gallant but misguided soldier lay a corpse upon the bloody pavement, cut off himself, as he had slain the oppressor, by the bullet of a concealed assassin. Such are the ways of Providence.

## COMFORT FOR SUCH AS MOURN THE DEATH OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

### *A Funeral Sermon.*

BY REV. JOHN PIERPONT.

ISAIAH xlix. 21.—I have lost my children, and am desolate.

In a community like that of which we form a part, consisting of a crowded population that has been drawn together by the hopes, or driven together by the disappointments and wants that wait on commercial enterprise, the death of an individual becomes so common an event, that it excites little attention, and makes but a slight impression beyond the narrow circle of relatives and friends. To the individual victim, indeed, whom Death has marked as his own, and who sees and feels that the king of terrors is advancing upon him, with a fixedness of purpose which human power cannot withstand, nor human skill evade, death appears not the less dreadful, because he has been so frequently seen, withdrawing one after another, from the crowd that is moving on with him to the dark and silent house. For, though Death may be seen, doing his work with others, so often as to be seen at last with little emotion; he can be felt, as certainly approaching, and as having actually taken hold of each one of us, but once. The very bosom, which the cold hand touches, feels its chill as deeply and as dreadfully as if it had never been seen before, laying its marble weight upon the bosoms of others. While only one falls, here and there in a throng, the great mass is but little affected by the gradual change which time and death are

silently producing, in the individuals that compose it.

When the angels of death go up against the high places of society, and leave those eminences desolate, where its servants and benefactors have stood, then, indeed, a general sentiment of bereavement and sorrow pervades the whole community, and the voice of admonition, as it comes forth from the tomb, is heard throughout a larger circle:—the loss which the public sustains is felt and recognized by the public; and the surviving kindred of the distinguished dead, perhaps, find some alleviation of their sorrows, in the sympathy which the public feels. The attention of religious assemblies, from the midst of which the great have fallen, is directed to their fall. Their virtues are commemorated—their course in life is traced—their characters sketched,—would that we could say that this is always done in the simplicity and fearlessness of truth!—and their conduct is held up as a model for the imitation of all who are emulous of greatness, and whose high ambition it is to die the death of the righteous, and to leave their name, a rich legacy to those whom they love. And it is proper that this should be so. It is in our nature to look upwards, and to have our regards fixed upon those who are above us in their stations and their attainments; and when

such fall away, so that their influence can be no longer felt in the direct and warm presence of the living and active spirit, it is salutary and proper to listen to the voice that issues from their tombs, were it for no other end than to learn, that no combination of talents or virtues can redeem their possessor from the power of the grave. But when Death, in what may be called his ordinary walks, enters the dwellings that are filled by those who make up the great mass of the community, and takes out his victims according to the measure of his ordinary claims, though in each particular case, the victim is exemplary, and interesting, and worthy of the respect that he enjoys abroad, and of the affections that cluster around him at home, still, in a crowded city, and amid the scenes of calamity and distress that so often come before us, the attempt would be vain to call aloud for a very lively sympathy, in the sorrows of the survivors, or to awaken a very strict attention to the teachings of death, however solemnly his message is usually delivered. His admonitions lose their effect in the very frequency of their repetition: as an agonizing pain may be borne till 'it is almost forgotten; or as he whose home is by the thundering cataract, falls asleep on the precipice that overhangs it.

But there are cases in which Death, even while going his round among the unambitious abodes of domestic affection, seems to have broken loose from the restraints that ordinarily limit his ravages, and to cut down one object of love after another with such an unsparing hand as to make inattention to his dreadful work almost unpardonable, in those who are connected with the desolated family, by the relations of the christian church, and who are associated with the mourners as fellow worshipers. And if a case ever occurs in which a private grief calls for public sympathy, and in which the death of those who have acted no distinguished part upon the stage of life may be justly regarded as a subject of serious meditation by a whole religious assembly, it is when, in the circle of six days—three little children from one family, the only children of their parents, have been laid in the tomb.\*

'Behold,' said Peter to the wife of Ananias, 'Behold the feet of them which have buried thy

husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.' And the unpitied angel of death, after he had once darkened this dwelling returned with the same fearful message to these parents. Behold the feet of them that have buried one of your children, your first born, are at the door, and shall carry out another, and another. And now they are all three lying still and are quiet. They sleep and are at rest.

Is not an event like this, so full of deep and melancholy interest, full also of instruction—of admonition—of consolation.

I. In the first place, this bereavement is full of instruction. To the parents it is calculated to give a knowledge of themselves. The strength of parental affection is often unknown, even to parents, while their children are in health, and while they claim only the ordinary measure of watchfulness and care. While we are engaged in the discharge of the duties of our several vocations, we are apt to consider the interest we feel in those duties as nothing less than the devotion with which we ought to meet them. We are apt to flatter ourselves that our labors are directed to the general benefit, that they are to be felt and blest in a wide circle,—and we forget, till we really disbelieve that, however regularly and faithfully our hands may move over the whole surface of our duty, the main spring of our efforts is coiled up and confined within the sacred enclosure of home. While the ties that bind our children to our hearts are drawn upon only by the weight of daily intercourse and dependence, we know not how strong they are; and we do not know their strength till they are drawn to their utmost tension by the fears that wait on sickness, and are at last broken by the merciless hand of death. And it is not till the word of God has gone forth against us, as it went forth, of old, against the king of Judah 'Write this man childless,' that we find how strong a motive to exertion is lost in the loss of those objects to which our affections bound us. We are thus brought to feel and acknowledge that what we had considered our devotion to our duties in the abstract, and to the general interests of the community, and to the good of the world at large, was, in truth, little more than our attachment to our children. We are thus brought so knowledge which is valuable to us, and which nothing but the breaking up of our family attachments could give us; and are, moreover, driven by the very desolation of our houses, to look

\* The three children of Mr. J. C. all died of one disorder, the group without one mentioned; the oldest was less than six years, and the youngest about two years old.

more widely abroad upon society, to connect ourselves with objects that are more remote, and to cultivate in our hearts the sentiment of a nearer relation to our kind, and to look upon the whole human race as a family of which the Head and Father is God.

It is in seasons of uncommon affliction and bereavement, also, that we are taught the degree and extent of our submission to the will of God. When nothing has occurred in respect to those who are near and interesting to us, to thwart our purposes, to darken our prospects, or to overthrow our expectations, we may flatter ourselves that we cordially and religiously acquiesce in all the appointments of that Being to whom belongs the disposal of all events. His appointments have always harmonized with our hopes and fulfilled them. 'Thy will be done' has been the constant offering of our hearts; for the doing of his will was but the doing of our own. And thus our very prosperity may have deluded us into the belief, that in all things we were ready to bow, with gratitude and faith, to the sovereign decrees of the Most High. But when one object of affection after another is taken away,—and one budding hope after another is nipped by the frosts of death, till at last parental love can clasp to a father's or a mother's bosom nothing but the pale visions of buried children, which swim before the eyes in unquiet sleep—then it is that we may know, if we will then ask our hearts, whether the petition 'thy will be done' goes up to God from them in the sincerity and warmth of filial resignation.

And it is in times of great domestic affliction, or when we see the hopes and the houses of friends and neighbors made desolate by the most extraordinary ravages of death, that we may all earn the uncertainty of this world's enjoyments—even of the purest and best of them. When the best hopes of our nature are blasted, although they are connected with youth and innocence, and the undying affections which the author of our nature has, with his own hand, planted and made to take root so deeply in it—when the creatures of almighty wisdom and love,—creatures that bear the image of the Infinite spirit of purity—creatures that are warm with life, and bounding around us in their cheerful ness, and arrayed in their beauty, and sparkling with the early beams of intelligence, are touched by the hand that is unseen, and turned

to dust and ashes while the tones of their sweet voices have not yet died upon our ears, what is there belonging to Earth on which we may calculate as a source of enduring and constant enjoyment? If the freshest and firmest of our hopes are thus without foundations, what is there, belonging to earth alone, that is not 'built on stubble!' And, if the most solid hopes of this world are rottenness, and if events, like the mournful one under consideration teach us that they are so, they may be, and they should be the means of inducing us to form relations and attach hopes to another world, which cannot be dissolved.

II. But the hand of death, when stretched out so fearfully and so frequently towards one dwelling, is extended for our *admonition*.

The child that is taken hold of by the hand of death is withdrawn beyond the reach of our instructions, beyond the influence of our example. While the young spirit was with us, were we faithful to answer its claims upon us? Was our direct influence salutary—conducive to its improvement—favorable to its salvation? Was our example such as to make virtue and piety appear venerable and attractive by seeing them associated with the parental character, and made influential by parental authority? Was it guarded, so far as a parent's counsels, example, and influence could guard it from the pollutions of sin? If our own hearts give a negative to these questions do they not loudly admonish us to be more faithful to surviving children, and more watchful over them, and more devoted to their immortal interests? But if death has taken them all, so that our resolutions of greater fidelity for the future have no object to which they can be directed, what bitterness must the wringing hand of conscience infuse into the cup of sorrow! Ought not, then, the bare possibility that death, when he does visit our dwelling, may not leave it till he has left us alone in it, to awaken us from every dream of security in which we may be passing our years, and make us break the bonds that lassitude, or habitual unfaithfulness has been drawing closer and closer around us, and give ourselves up, for the time to come, in a religious devotion to our duties as parents, who feel that our children may soon go to give an account of us to God, and that whether they go before us or not, we must soon go to his judgement seat to render him an account of ourselves?

To the young, especially, the desolations which death has wrought in one family of little children, (who only a few days ago were as young as themselves, and most of them even too young to come to the Church for instruction and worship,) are particularly full of admonition. A whole family of young children who were very lately as full of life and hope as any who now hear me, have in a few days been all taken out of their parents' arms, and laid in the grave.—Let little children be admonished by this event that their youth, their innocence, and their hopes are no security against death. Let them be admonished, while they yet live and enjoy health to be diligent in learning at school, and obedient to their parents at home, and silent and attentive at church;—and frequently to repeat their little prayers both when they lie down and when they rise up, and constantly to meditate upon the Maker of every thing beautiful that they see, and the Giver of all good things that they enjoy;—and never to forget that He sees them wherever they are, and knows everything that they are doing by night or by day; and that they, like these other little ones, may die while they are very young and thus be cut off from all opportunity to amend the wrong they may have done, and to secure the eternal favor of God, by their innocence and obedience.

III. In the death of young children there is consolation. He, who once took little ones into his arms and blessed them, assured us that of such is the kingdom of God. He told those who were inquiring of him who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, that it was he who should humble himself and become like a little child, that he had taken and set in the midst of them. And the little children that have been taken from the midst of us are equally the emblems of that kingdom where all are innocent and of a lowly mind.

To those of us who are called to resign our children to an early grave, consolation springs up from our *knowledge*, and from our *faith*;—from what we know of them, and from what we believe concerning God and futurity.

Concerning *them* we know that they have escaped, and *safely* escaped, the painful and often the too powerful trials that wait upon the living. They can feel no more pain, and are in no danger of shewing impatience under it.—They are sure not to murmur at the chastise-

ments of the Lord, for they are to be no more chastised. They can not be seduced into the scenes of Vice, for they are withdrawn from the reach of her seductions. Neither the love of pleasure, nor the thirst for gold shall break pown the barriers that parental love has raised up around them in the moral principles that have been implanted in a good education. We know that, when the cold blasts of winter go over their narrow bed, they are where the storm cannot reach them. We know that their hearts shall never be broken with grief; that their souls shall never be agonized by remorse; and that their spirits shall not consume away in the heart-sickness of hope deferred. We feel, for we know, that they are taken away from the evil to come—from the temptations that might be too strong for their virtue, and from the sufferings which might be greater than they could bear: and in respect to the exemption which they enjoy from all the ills of life, it is in the deep conviction of our souls that we say,

'Far happier they, escaped to endless rest,  
Than we who yet survive to wake and weep.'

And in even the total desolation of parental affection and earthly hope, there is living consolation in our christian *faith*. We believe that their young spirits are still in the hand of the Father of spirits:—that he loves them not less than he always loved them; and that if we, being evil, knew how to give them good gifts while they were with us, their heavenly Father will much more give them the rich endowments of his holy spirit. We believe that they are removed to another province of their Father's empire, and that, there, other sources of knowledge and enjoyment are open before them. We believe that Death, which to them and to us appeared so terrible and so unpitiful while he was dragging the reluctant spirit from her tabernacle of clay, is now regarded by them as one of the kindest powers in all the ministry of heaven;—as that power that gently released them from a painful and perilous alliance with the dust, with all its frailties and passions, and introduced them to higher and holier associations; and that now it is a matter of holy rejoicing and of perpetual gratitude, that they were thus early removed from the world, upon which they were cast, in the infancy of their being.

Thus may we derive instruction, admonition, and consolation, from the desolations of death when he has fallen upon children and forgotten to spare. May the voice of God which is speaking from these children's graves be heard by parents and by children. It says 'Be ye also ready—ready to give up your children,—ready to go yourselves. It says, to each Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. It says of the little ones who are gone 'These are they which were not defiled—these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.'